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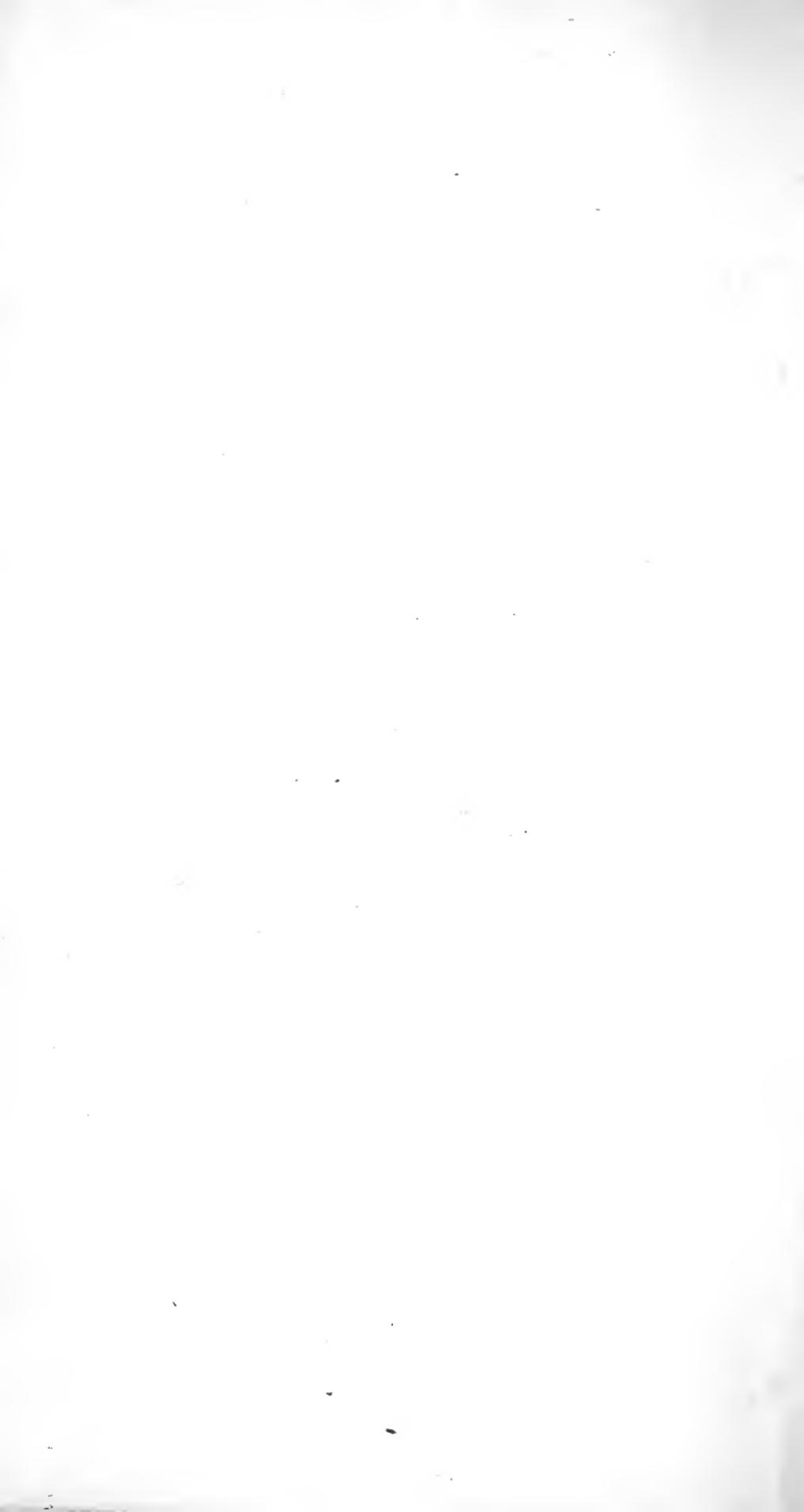
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THE MAID OF THE DOE.



THE
MAID OF THE DOE;
A Lay

OF THE REVOLUTION.

BY

AN UNITED STATES' MAN.

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ARE DEEDS OF GLORY WANTING TO THE MUSE?  
CAN SHE NO SUBJECT FROM OUR ANNALS CHOOSE  
WORTHY THE SONG?

*Poem before the Phi Beta Kappa Society of  
Harvard University, by Francis C. Gray.*

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TO

THE DESCENDANTS OF THE PATRIOTS

WHOSE NAMES ADORN THIS POEM,

IT IS AFFECTIONATELY

DEDICATED

BY THEIR KINSMAN, THROUGH THAT ILLUSTRIOUS
BROTHERHOOD,

THE AUTHOR.

APRIL 26th, 1842.

P R E F A C E

TO

THE MAID OF THE DOE.

P R E F A C E .

I HAVE thought my fellow-citizens might receive not unfavorably an attempt to present them with any scenes or soldiers of the Revolution in poetry; for circumstances have made me equally familiar with the richest and poorest classes of our country, and I have found the same interest pervading all in relation to the events and personages of that period of our history. Yet the reader should remember that to the success of such an attempt there are difficulties, apart from any want of genius in the author, inherent in his subject. The enlightened age and cultivated people, in which, and by whom the Revolution was accomplished, have made the heroic period of the Commonwealth the subject of exact and familiar history. Whereas poetry delights in the vague and the shadowy, in an uncertain light, and a distant horizon, where its figures may loom.

Our origin as a separate people presents this contrast to that of most others: that, whereas they have to deduce their early history from poetry; we have to reverse the process, and to work the former into the latter,

if we would present the one under the beautiful aspect of the other. From rhapsodies and runes, lays and legends, and those other forms which poetry assumes, whether concealed under hieroglyphics, murmuring from ruins, or towering in imperishable monuments, the patient historians of the old world have deduced the probable beginnings of its renowned nations. But the poets of America who would select for their themes the events and actors dearest to their country and themselves, must work into their fairy fabrics resolves of congresses, reports of officers, and the rigid narratives of actual observers, and yet represent truly every scene described, and every hero portrayed ; for our hearts will not endure that truths so precious should be deformed with fable, or that persons so beloved should be presented under any other than their own familiar aspects. The reflecting reader will acknowledge that this is a difficulty not easily surmounted ; and in the diffidence of a first effort, I have endeavored to lighten it, by selecting for my subject a portion of the war whose theatre was remote from the common highways of our business and pleasure, and which, though very important and glorious in itself, has not been rendered familiar to the public by the works of any artist. None of the heroes of King's Mountain, or the Cowpens, who so fatally crippled the army of Cornwallis ; none of those who conducted the famous retreat before him from Catawba to the Dan, none, in short, of all those whose efforts saved the South, and with it, the Confederacy, appear even amid those magnificent groupings of Trumbull, which adorn

the Capitol, except Morgan, Williams, and Howard; and the two latter merely as spectators in a scene of peace. This, then, is an additional reason why an attempt to render this meritorious portion of their benefactors more familiar to the fancies of my countrymen should be kindly received by them.

Nor is the scenery amid which these operations were conducted without strong attractions to minds occupied with poetry. The ranges of the Alleghany form a grand back ground for any picture which would portray them; and the rivers which flow from those wild recesses were magnificent actors in the scene. Besides, the mountain legends, scanty as they are, afford some color to fictions which may happily blend them with the historic incidents which illustrate that region; and it would be uncandid in me not to add, that the accidents of birth and fortune tended to endear to me the scene and subject I have chosen.

But it may be asked, what, after all, is the use of having any portion of our history wrought into poetry? Without entering into a discussion about the uses of poetry, I may briefly vindicate my labors by answering, because the most attractive and impressive form in which truth can be exhibited, is that of poetry; and few will deny that it is highly beneficial that all useful knowledge should be imparted under its fairest and most persuasive aspect. Hence it is that the greatest teachers, human and divine, have conveyed their instructions in the most impressive forms of speech. Witness the great classics of antiquity, and Moses, David, and the Prophets. The

discourses of our Saviour himself are full of the spirit of poetry, and assumed as much of its form as was appropriate to oral teaching. His sermon on the Mount commences like a psalm—"Blessed!" "Blessed!" "Blessed!" ringing along the opening sentences, and succeeded by the exclamations, "Rejoice and be exceeding glad!" "Ye are the salt of the earth!" "Ye are the light of the world!" The reader of the gospels must be struck throughout with the tendency of the divine spirit to manifest itself in the shapes of poetry, from the moment of its "descending like a dove;" and it seemed good to the Allwise, that what Christians, at least, must deem the most important of all truths, should be announced, not in the distinct homeliness of prose, but in the figurative beauty of poetry, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" And all this is in perfect keeping with the revelations which the Creator has made of himself in his undoubted works; and thus tends to render equally undoubted his word—both being full alike of beauty and glory, the soul and the crown of poetry.

I trust no one will imagine any of the preceding remarks designed to deprecate criticism, or that I deem it either possible or desirable that any work of art should ultimately stand on any thing but its intrinsic merits. But American literature labors under so many disadvantages, that the ablest advocacy of any specimen of it, would yet fail to give it a fair chance of success. In the first place, it has to contend against all the disengagement thrown upon it by the legislation of the coun-

try, which deems it too insignificant to protect—nay, which casts upon it the reproach which attends our laws for affording no protection to the property of foreign authors. For the argument to justify the refusal to establish international copyright is, that reading has become an intellectual necessary of life, which cannot be supplied by the home production; and, therefore, our citizens must be permitted to pirate it from abroad. No other view of the subject can even palliate the conduct of Congress, in breaking in upon and severing the great community of letters, which has heretofore been deemed one republic, and committing the peculiarly odious injustice of refusing the benefit of equitable legislation to those exalted and honored intellects devoted to giving them light and joy.*

* I have not yet seen the reasons upon which the committee of the Senate rest the refusal, it has already announced, to report in favor of international copyright. It is to be hoped they will be stronger than any which I can imagine. The committee must remember that a report "for Buncomb" will not answer in this case. They are the priests of Apollo with whom they will have to deal. Let them recollect the fate of those to whom long ago were in vain extended in supplication "the sceptre and the laurel crown." Let them imagine that the world hears again the words of Cryses:

"If prayers may not, O let these presents move,
And dread avenging Phœbus, son of Jove!"

Let them remember that it was not with impunity that his prayer was rejected—

Δεινη δε κλαυγη γενετ' αγγυεοιο Βιοιο.

Dire was the clangor of the silver bow.

And they too may find that their rejection of the prayers of the

Secondly. In every other country the booksellers and publishers are the natural allies and patrons of its authors ; but here it is the reverse. The interests of the former are certainly indifferent, if not opposed to the latter ; for it is impossible to have a class of good laborers in any vocation who are not adequately paid. There are some idle talkers who rant about genius finding its true reward in its own exercise and achievements, and not in filthy lucre. And they might with equal reason upbraid a florist for manuring his favorite rose ; and tell him that the divine flower gets its beauty and fragrance from the beam and breath of spring, and not from his offensive dirt. 'Tis true, thank God ! that the highest exercise of the highest faculties affords a pleasure, perhaps superior to all others, and certainly such as nothing else can bestow. But the misery of it is, that unless something else be bestowed from some quarter or other, those highest faculties can have but little opportunity for their highest exercise. They must be applied to the homelier efforts of acquiring or preserving the means of subsistence, hospitality, elegance. Who ever heard of an amateur that was really eminent in any thing ? Who supposes that intellectual gifts are so distributed that idle hours may produce the fruits of lives of labor ? Homer, Shakspeare, Milton, wrote for their bread. Demosthenes, Cicero, Chatham, Henry,

gifted ones of the world, who come with their presents of so many precious works, will be followed by plague spots on their memories, whose taint will extend to their country.

devoted their lives to eloquence. Phidias, Michael Angelo, Raphael, lived in their studios. Washington studied and practised arms and politics from his youth ; and Napoleon from his boyhood. But, though there may be a few rare instances, where short and sudden efforts of genius may accomplish much, who can expect to find the possessors of it numerous enough to sustain the literature of a country ? Its laborers, as in all other avocations, will be found, both in numbers and ability, to bear a well fixed proportion to their pecuniary reward ; and as the booksellers of a country are the paymasters in this case, it must be to their interest to cherish a literature which costs them nothing, and to depress that which might otherwise become its rival and diminish its profits. That they publish sometimes at their own risk is true ; but that must be when the profitableness of the operation is pretty apparent, or to give their workmen employment, and thus keep them together, at the risk of a small loss ; or from public spirit, which no class in this country is wholly without.

A third obstacle to the success of a book truly national—that is, whose author and subject are both of this country—is the alienation of the public literary taste from domestic themes, imagery, sentiments, by reason of its almost total occupation with foreign literature. To appreciate properly the force of this obstacle let any one turn to the best specimen of Chinese poetry he can lay his hand on ; and he will find it addressed to tastes, sentiments, and associations of ideas so different from his own, that the literary delights of the celestial empire

will seem absurd and ridiculous to him. Even the bible, familiar as we are made with it from our cradles, often impresses us with the necessity of a very different training from that given to our imaginations, if we would appreciate properly such of its poetry as is most peculiarly oriental. "Thy hair is like a flock of goats that appear from Gilead." "Thy teeth are as a flock of sheep that go up from the shearing, whereof every one beareth twins, and there is not one barren among them." "Thy neck is as a tower of ivory; thine eyes like the fish-pools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bath-ribbim: thy nose is as the tower of Lebanon, which looketh toward Damascus." Who among us has yet learned to be pleased with these descriptions of female beauty, though they be from the "Song of Songs, which is Solomon's."

To come to nearer times and nations, analogous reflections will account for the little value reciprocally set by the French and English on each other's poetry. Voltaire ridiculed Shakspeare; and Byron denounced the whole mass of French poetry as "that whetstone of the teeth, monotony on wire." Hence the English speak of the two natures, human nature and French nature; and no doubt their Gallican neighbors reciprocate the compliment. To come nearer home, I may mention an instance in my own experience, and probably that of many of my readers (if indeed I shall have many), where the progress of one's knowledge operates on his imagination. When I first read of General Davie, I bewailed his name. I could associate it with nothing but "dainty Davie," and "down the burn Davie love,"

and others of the pretty little pastoral songs of Scotland. But when I became familiar with the exploits of William Richardson Davie, and learned that amid the dismay which followed Gates's defeat at Camden, he expended the last dollar of an estate left him by his maternal uncle, in equipping and mounting a corps to make head against the devastating invaders, and performed with it prodigies of valor; when I dwelt upon his surprise of the enemy at Warhab's, his defence of Charlotte, his turning from the laurels which he loved, to the country he loved more, and serving her where he might be more useful, though less renowned; when I afterwards traced his civil career, and became acquainted with his love of letters and his zeal in promoting learning, the little pastoral associations vanished from his name, and it gradually assumed the dignity of that great one of Israel, from which it is corrupted, and which was rendered so illustrious by the hero of the sling and of the harp, the conqueror of Goliah and the soother of Saul. Yet fearing that some reader might have my old diminishing associations with it, I felt obliged upon my first introduction of it to crowd it up with others, and invoke even a jingle to relieve its insignificancy.

The process of reasoning, here merely suggested, will also serve to explain why a poet, whose genius is peculiar and topics novel, is often, at first, the object of ridicule, and at last, of idolatry; as has actually happened to Mr. Wordsworth. For the public imagination did not know, at first, how to appreciate the treasures he

presented to it ; while the critics, (so many of whom we see typified in cats, which steal upon sleeping mocking-birds, and fill with Orpheuses maws, whose legitimate food is mice,) ambitious mousers, are always ready to pounce upon the weak moments of the divinest geniuses, and destroy them with the fangs of that ridicule which makes such delightful sport for the grinning million. But the true enthusiasts cannot be deterred from drinking at their sweet fountains. The crowd soon begin to sip of draughts which they see inspiring such pure joy, and gradually join in homâge to the prophet at whose bidding they gushed from the rock ; and there he now sits, the divine Wordsworth, veiled in the roses of his Kydal Mount, the beloved and the lover of mankind.

These suggestions, (for I have not space for more than mere suggestions,) will convince the reflecting reader that a certain preparation of the public mind is necessary to the cordial reception of any work of art. If what Shakspeare says of a jest be true, viz : that its prosperity lies in the ear of the hearer ; much more so is it, that the prosperity of a poem lies in the mind of the reader. If that be preoccupied with ideas, associations, preferences, entirely different from the work presented, he will turn away from it, at first, however excellent, as some frantic lover of a “brow of Egypt” might from “Helen’s beauty.” The foreign literature with which the mind of the reading public is chiefly occupied, has enamored it of the crowds and grandeurs of the old world, the wonders of its arts, its arms, its opulence, its romance, its history. Our national themes present ima-

gery and sentiment very different, and such as, however endeared to the every day life of our people, they are not accustomed to look for amid the recreations they may seek in the fine arts. Therefore an American poet, who treats a national subject, has always before his eyes to chill his ardor, the neglect of his legislature, the reluctance of his publishers, and the indifference of his readers. Is it then surprising that American genius, which is so prominent in other departments, should have contributed so little to literature? Is it not rather to be wondered at, that the *genus irritabile vatum*, the sensitive bosoms of poets, should ever encounter all these barriers of ice, for the sake of any sunshine of favor they may hope to find beyond them? I trust, then, I may be excused for attempting to soften the last, as I approach it, chilled as I am by the influence of the first, and frozen as I expect to be in my struggles with the second.*

THE AUTHOR.

UNITED STATES, *July 26th, 1842.*

* It is but justice to the publisher of this to say, that the apprehension last expressed was at once removed by his liberality and public spirit.

INTRODUCTION

TO

THE MAID OF THE DOE.

INTRODUCTION.

I ROAMED, when Fall to roam beguiles,
Amid remote Virginian wilds,
There where her Alleghanies rise
The highest in the bluest skies,
And ridge with ridge so close unites,
They push their valleys up their heights,
Which thus with streams of diamond drops
Wind picturesquely round their tops,
And, interweaving mountains, go
Wide spreading to a vast plateau.
From that high mass of ridge-webbed plain
Is stretched the beauteous Blue Ridge chain,
Which from the parent mountain swings,
Where rise the Dan's unnumbered springs.

Not far from these the fountains gleam,
Which swell Kanawha's rushing stream,
And more transparent flow than any
That sparkle on the Alleghany.

O'er all the wooded summits there
The Buffalo knob looms high and bare,

Its crest a rock enormous, hurled
Thither when earthquakes heaved the world.
Its Northern steeps with wilds are hung,
In which the she wolf hides her young,
And in their crags, with shrubbery filled,
Their rugged nests the ravens build.

Less steep descend its Southern woods,
But hiss their caves with serpent broods,
And the first sun-beams of the spring
Out on the rocks the reptiles bring,
And from their rattles whizzes shrill
The signal of the blows that kill.

Up-towers from these hideous sides,
It's brow high as the storm-cloud rides,
And 'gainst the Western tempest's shock
Frowns in a precipice of rock.
In this, its legends if we heed,
The golden eagle used to breed—
Bird of the sun, his plumage gleams
So richly with the solar beams,
'Twould seem he brings the lustrous dye
Back from his soarings to the sky.

But gently to the East decline
Its summits in a waving line,
Pursuing which, a deer path yields
Good guidance to its lofty fields,
And by that trace with easy tread
The hunter climbs the mountain's head.

On the first bench below its height
A trace of ruin greets the sight.

Some rugged stones together laid,
Seem as of yore a hearth they made ;
The sunny spot of earth around
Looks as if once 'twas garden ground,
And the young trees an aspect wear
Which says the hand of man was there.
But fires too oft those forests sweep
For time such frail records to keep ;
Yet legends of the mountain tell
Of one who, chief and sentinel,
Did there a lonely watch-tower seek
For those below on Tory Creek ;
A glittering stream, which took its name
From some who fled from sword and flame,
Before the forces of the king
Aid to the loyalists could bring,
Whose settlements were on and near
The upper branches of Cape Fear.

While gathering from the mountaineers
These fading tales of faded years,
Across our path, as white as snow
Flashed through the shade a startled doe.
No gun was levelled at the sight,
To stop the beauty in her flight,
Though there were rifles at whose cracks
The deer dropped often in their tracks,
And held by hands well used to bring
To earth the raven on the wing.

But more than one cried: "Let her go!
There's no mistake about the doe;
Swift as she flies, see yonder plain
Upon her neck the bloody stain!
And never yet did luck betide
The rifle levelled at her side!"

This strange exclaim and stranger pause
Engaged me much to learn their cause.

Then a vague story did they tell
Of one that on the knob did dwell,
Whose daughter looked in the rude wild
Of heaven more than earth a child,
And whereso'er her footsteps strayed
A doe still frolicked round the maid.
But war at length its flag unsurled
In these recesses of the world;
The dwellers of the lonely wood
Then vanished in a scene of blood;
The petted doe remained forlorn,
But soon the mother of a fawn,
Whose startled look and color white
Came from the gentle parent's fright,
The time she got the bloody speck
Pictured on her descendant's neck;
Since then the mountain hunters know
Naught of the Maiden of the Doe.

Much mused I on the legend wild,
And much on beauty's lonely child,

And on the ways of Providence,
Their mystery and benevolence.
Do torrents tear the mountain's side ?
Soon flowering vines the ravage hide—
Rent is a heart by fortune's blow ?
Pity and love their balm bestow—
Fades from the rugged wild a maid,
The sunbeam of its sombre shade ?
Mysterious influences bestow
A charm upon a mountain doe,
Which flashes through the wilderness
Gleams of the vanished loveliness ;
And huntsmen as she glances by
See woman's magic in her eye,
And in her tint and footstep trace
A maiden's purity and grace,
And thus preserve, by fancy's aid,
The lady tenant of the shade.

Muse of the wild, let me prolong
Her memory in embalming song—
My guide through many a mountain wood,
Sweet solacer of solitude,
Give me to sing for others weal
What thou didst teach to see and feel,
While I the fortunes sought to know
Of the lone Maiden of the Doe.

THE MAID OF THE DOE.

CANTO FIRST.

THE MAID OF THE DOE.

CANTO FIRST.

THE CAPTIVES.

I.

OCTOBER's sun, in golden vest,
Hangs o'er the mountains of the west,
Gilding with long and lustrous streaks
A sea of ridges wild and peaks.
Well those who view it may believe
That earth did erst with ocean heave,
And stood the instant fixed, it heard
The sound of that omnific word,
Which bade the mountains show their heads,
And called the oceans to their beds.

II.

The clouds above, in evening's glow,
Hang mimicking the realm below;
In gold and crimson's various tinge,
The distant shadowy heights they fringe,

With such harmonious hues, the eye
Scarce knows the mountains from the sky.

III.

But not to view the gorgeous scene,
Doth yonder lonely gazer lean
Against the Buffalo's rocky crest.
Scarce hath he glanced upon the west,
But sighing oft, his eye he strains
Far o'er the Carolinian plains,
Which from his watch-tower stretch to view,
As ocean wide, as ocean blue.
Just to his left the sun's last streaks
Are gilding Otter's beauteous peaks,
But yet he turns not to behold
Their shadowy azure touched with gold.
His dreamy eye with gaze intent
On the House Mountain still is bent,
A single link cast from its chain
Upon the Carolinian plain,
On which a natural structure stands,
Shaped like the works of human hands,
And on the hill a name bestows,
And guides the wanderer as he goes.

IV.

When the last beams of fading day
Were trembling on his locks of gray,
And o'er the object of his sight
Was gathering fast the veil of night,
Words mingled with his sighs of pain—
“Alas!” he cried, “I watch in vain!”

Nor further spoke, but downward strode
To seek the deer-path, now his road.
Silent he went, with solemn pace,
Soon gliding through the naked space,
Which, mid the shadows of the night
Gleamed out, a little field of light.
But now his narrow way descends
Where thick the forest shade extends,
And leaf on leaf new-fallen hath
Dimmer and dimmer made his path.
As slow he picked his way along,
The bird of evening* ceased his song;
The golden eagle from on high
Wheeled down as darkness climbed the sky;
The raven, from his sable throat,
Sounded his homeward gathering note—
Silence came o'er the tribes of day,
And left the earth to night's drear sway.

V.

First signal of her reign, was heard
The hooting of her solemn bird.
Next howls from wild and dismal dell,
The wolf, her other sentinel.
Aroused by these, the foxes bark,
The bear more hideous makes the dark,
The wild-cat steals to seek her food,
The deer glide timid through the wood,

* The inhabitants of the region described, call the wood-thrush, wood-robin, or wood-lark, the evening-bird.

And fell and shrill upon the gale,
Rings out the panther's startling wail.

VI.

The night wind, in its solemn song,
Successive bore these sounds along,
But the sad wanderer of the dark
Seemed their wild cadences to mark,
No more than lately did his eye
The glories of the earth and sky.
His dog their terrors seemed to know,
Nor far would from his master go.
The latter sauntered as before,
Scarce conscious of the arms he wore,
The rifle in his hand not felt,
More than the dagger in his belt.

VII.

But now a light gleams through the dark—
He hears a dog's announcing bark,
And sees upon the tree tops glow,
The blaze of his rude hearth below.
Not with glad hand he opes his door,
But sighs to touch his cabin floor,
Though then a voice of sweetness said,
“Methinks it is my father's tread;”
And she who breathed the silver sound
Sprung to his breast with joyous bound,
And playful questioned why he strayed
So late beneath the evening shade—
Did he not hear the wolf's long howl?
Did he not hear the bear's short growl?

Amid caresses and demands,
She from his shoulders and his hands
Took pouch and gun, and hung or laid
Each on a rack, of antlers made.
With fondling hand and accent sweet,
Next did his dog her kindness greet,
Whose quickened breath and gazing eye
Gave from his beating heart reply.

VIII.

Another angel look the while
Gazed on the sire with deeper smile,
Whose love and light together veiled
Whate'er her anxious heart assailed.
Time's touches on that placid face,
Seemed but to hallow with their trace,
And beauty's light had faded on her,
But as on Guido's mild Madonna.
Yet not its look of sweetness seemed
To smooth the brow on which it beamed.
But first a sigh his silence broke,
And thus his discontent he spoke.

IX.

“ The die is cast ! This savage wild
Must hold my darling wife and child,
Through all the horrors winter's snow
Around the solitude will throw.
I watched till scarce my aching eyes
Could see the Carolinian skies,
But from our beacon mountain there,
No signal curled aloft in air ;

No wreathing smoke's ascending line
Gave to my view the appointed sign—
And this, alas! the latest day
That I could hope for its display.
The king's advisers turn his arms
To keep their Northern friends from harms,
While the poor South is left to feel
The rage of rebel fire and steel.
Our plundered wealth rebellion feasts,
While we must shelter with wild beasts.
This wretched hut, this howling wood,
This hideous mountain solitude
Must hold, as frightened beasts of chase,
Those who a noble's hall might grace,
And through whose veins the life-drops run
From the high race of Hamilton.
O had my father rather tilled
In poverty his Highland field,
Or drawn subsistence from the seas
That wash the sterile Hebrides,
Than sought to gather golden stores
On this new world's plebeian shores!
There might our lives have reached their goal,
Rich in the treasures of the soul,
And, with our faith untempted left,
Of country, home, nor king bereft,
Our hearts in gratitude might own,
‘Man doth not live by bread alone.’
But here—yet oh! why need I tell
Of woes my loved ones know too well?
And which my hand should try to heal,
And not my tongue to make them feel.”

X.

“ And do you not devote your life
To bless our lot?” replied his wife.
“ Why are you buried in this wild,
But me to shelter and your child ?
O but for us you now might be
Among the royal chivalry,
Or at your natal hearth afford
To trust your safety to your sword.
But that our daughter might remain
Beyond the fear of hostile stain,
And yet your arm be not too far
To serve when needed in the war,
You sought the shelter of this wild,
To keep your treasures undefiled—
Obedient still, with heart and hand
To love and honor’s high command.
Grieve not if in such holy cause,
The service suffering with it draws.
Is there a realm where mortal sees
The path of duty spread with ease ?
Is’t not enough if this we climb
Is safe, and hath its views sublime ?
Think you that winter blasts will freeze
Here worse than in the Hebrides ?
That here the driving snow-storm chills
More than on Scotland’s woodless hills ?
And O that land hath many a time
Been reddened with disloyal crime,
And the last Stuart that touched her soil
Fled from the sword of civil broil,

And hid in huts his royal brow,
 Humbler than this which holds us now.
 But O why mention earthly kings
 As having known our sufferings,
 When He, the king of heaven and earth,
 While linked for us to mortal birth,
 Endured far more than our distress,
 A wanderer in the wilderness,
 And when from persecution fled,
 Had oft nowhere to lay his head.
 My husband, thank Him for the good
 He gives us in this solitude,
 Nor deem a lot too hard to bear,
 Which you see us contented share."

XI.

"Indeed we do, my father!" said
 Caressingly the lovely maid,
 "And can you call our house a hut?
 I know it is a cabin, but
 A very nice one, with wings too,
 And no one can deny 'tis new.
 Observe how well the cheerful blaze
 The room and furniture displays.
 The furs came home to day; and see
 How richly spread is our settee.
 Is not the warm fur of the bear
 Better than icy woven hair?
 Behold your chair—the panther's skin
 Makes it delightful to loll in.
 And, see, for curtains with what pride
 I have arranged the blue deer's hide.

And, lo! there linger on the year
Some flowers yet our cot to cheer,
And berries by the crystal flood
That grow, the corals of the wood.
I gathered in my morning roam
All these to decorate our home,
And, father, I must say this room
Wears nothing like an air of gloom."

XII.

Who could such truth and fondness hear,
From those so beautiful and dear,
Nor find, whatever grief he felt,
Before their soft enchantment melt?
When gathered to their evening meal,
His heart more than resigned did feel,
And in their smiles and generous fare,
Forgot its weight of wasting care.
A gleam of joy his evening closed,
And sleep profound his soul composed—
Sleep that in each diurnal span
Levels the fates of beast and man.

XIII.

The morning in the vales below,
Beamed on a frost as white as snow.
But not the icy veil was spread
As yet upon the mountain's head,
Though the chill breath of night and morn,
Announced the winter hastening on,
Too plainly to admit delay
In guarding 'gainst his stormy day.

XIV.

The sylvan spot, their present care,
Seemed like an islet of the air,
So high the little nook of ground,
So severed from the realm around.
But yet, within an hour's walk,
Was spread, along the Laurel Fork,
And up the edge of Tory Creek,
Deep sheltered in the mountains bleak,
A recent settlement of those
Fled like themselves from vengeful foes.
Beside the streams the fertile plain
Produced in plenty grass and grain,
And nowhere else is better found,
The mealy apple of the ground.
The crystal waters turned the wheel,
Which kept the neighborhood in meal;
And thus what man essential deems
To comfort, gathered to the streams.

XV.

The people of this snug resort,
Were chiefly of the humbler sort,
And several had been tenants on
The wide domain of Hamilton,
Whom long before he hither sent
To make this mountain settlement.
He too had fixed his cabin there,
But did not choose his daughter fair
Should have companionship so rude,
To taint her budding womanhood.

Therefore, and that his temper high
Brooked not to have the crowd too nigh,
He, like the eagle, built his nest
Contiguous to the mountain's crest ;
A name for which his followers search
Not long, but call it Eagle's Perch.
There, while the summer spread its shade,
He gladdened in the choice he made.
The little level space around
The cabin gave him garden ground,
And at its edge a crystal spring
Soothed with perpetual murmuring.
Though strange it seem, 'tis true, that where
The very summit shoots in air,
Around the rock that crowns its brow,
The garden fruits spontaneous grow,
Currents and gooseberries and cherries,
Wild apples, grapes, and service-berries.
These formed the edging of a field,
Which might convenient pasture yield.
Here might his lonely daughter stray,
And with her fawn securely play ;
And, hearing the familiar notes
Breathed from the many house-birds' throats,
Attracted by the sunny space,
And garden berries at the place ;
And seeing in the distance too
Her native plain expand to view,
He trusted she might find the wild
Of that oppressiveness beguiled,
With which obstructing hills appall
The spirit like a prison wall,

And make the vale in which we dwell
Seem almost like a dungeon cell.

XVI.

But shall they brave the winter's snow
So near that loftiest mountain's brow ?
May not its drifts tremendous come,
And bury up their humble home ?
Besides, 'twas distant from the mill,
And hard to climb the icy hill ;
Nor then the desolated wood
Could yield a single cow her food ;
And 'twas a steep and rugged way
To bring so far supplies of hay.

XVII.

On t'other hand, to those whose strife
Is with the daily wants of life,
To build a house, the humblest one,
Is not a thing so easily done.
It takes the sunny summer's day
To dry the mass of chinking clay,
And time and trouble both it costs
To work such masonry through frosts.
T'were better both should be bestowed
To build them shelters, mend their road,
And gather from the swamp and wood
Pea-vine and grass for winter-food,
For such few stock as they must keep ;
The rest might winter on the creek.

XVIII.

As to alarms from drifting snow,
The trees around their house that grow,
No token gave of crushing storms
In their erect, majestic forms,
Whose arms for centuries had swung
In the loud tempests as they sung.
Upon the towering ridge the trees,
Which met the brunt of winter's breeze,
In ragged boughs and state downcast,
Told of the ravage of the blast.
But theirs, a snug and sunny nook,
Uprooting winds had never struck,
But hung below the mountain's crest,
A coigne of vantage for a nest.

XIX.

Besides, whate'er employs their care
Soon grows to human bosoms dear.
That spot, their choice in all the wild,
Won on the parents and the child.
Harmonious to their fancies grown,
These gave it beauties not its own.
The favorite flowers the maiden brought
From home when first the wild she sought,
Gained charms beyond what nature lent:
Companion of her banishment,
The monthly rose, with blooming cheek,
Looked in her face as if 'twould speak;
The honey-suckle's coral bell
Had of past days its tale to tell;

The pansy, purple velvet leaved,
 Helped memory in the sweets it weaved;
 And many a soft historiette
 Breathed in the delicate mignonette.
 These on the cabin's sunny side
 Had yet the autumnal frost defied,
 And, by her care, their bloom might glow
 Upon the winter's early snow.

XX.

The birds had learned to feel secure
 In feeding near the cabin door;
 The sparrow chirped to find his crumb,
 The robin hopped to seek his worm,
 The blue-bird, with his sky-dipt coat,
 Welcomed the morn with gladsome note,
 And in the alders by the spring
 The tufted red-bird loved to sing.
 Not a mere summer friend, the snow
 Reflects his bosom's crimson glow,
 Bravely he chirps through dreary storms,
 And ever as the sun-beam warms
 The bank he loves, awakes a strain,
 Which whispers spring will come again.
 These soft adornments lent a grace
 Which made them partial to the place,
 And they will not, though lone and bleak,
 Exchange the mountain for the creek.

XXI.

“ Well,” said the husband, “ since, my dear,
 It is resolved to winter here,

The next thing to decide is what
Must be henceforth the prisoner's lot.
You say his wound is nearly healed,
And that his spirit will not yield
Longer to stay upon parol
Than until you pronounce him whole.
Well, if his pride will have it so,
He must again a prisoner go
Back to the place from which your care
Removed, that you might nurse him here.
'Twill grieve me, for 'twill touch your heart,
I know, to see him thus depart;
And rebel though he be, I own
He is, at least, a gallant one;
And much it grates me that a chain
Should gall a limb of gentle strain.
I'll seek his presence; bosoms steeled
'Gainst harshness, oft to kindness yield;
And if it please him, he shall know
In Hamilton a generous foe."

XXII.

This said, he sought a hut hard by,
Where the lone captive breathed his sigh—
His sigh that cruel fate withheld
His sword from many a battle-field,
Where his companions late in arms
Were wooing honor's dazzling charms.
Months, which to him seemed years, had passed
Since flashed that sword in battle last.
And that was the disastrous day
When, wounded and o'erthrown, he lay

Encumbered with his slaughtered horse,
 And yielded to resistless force.
 Rude leech-craft to his wounds applied,
 His journey to the mountain side,
 Fever, which pain and sorrow gave,
 Had almost brought him to the grave.
 Then did his present hostess seek
 The sufferer's prison on the creek.
 Removed him in a litter here,
 And nurtured him with tender care.

XXIII.

With his effects were brought along
 A volume of Homeric song,
 And now the immortal page he read
 Where Agamemnon, Diomed,
 And Ithacus, the wounded three,
 Went forth the battling hosts to see ;
 For yet their skill and presence might
 Direct and animate the fight.
 Charmed with the world-enchanting strain.
 His soul forgot corroding pain,
 When Hamilton approaching, broke
 On his rapt mood and gently spoke.

XXIV.

“ Lieutenant Laurens, I have sought
 Your presence, by those feelings brought
 With which the soldier's breast should glow
 Towards an honorable foe.
 Thee such I deem ; and therefore pray.
 A prisoner you consent to stay,

Where'er on mountain ridge or dell
You please to fix a place to dwell,
With liberty at will to roam
A full day's journey from your home;
In all things else as uncontrolled
As prisoners of war paroled.
This hut, where fortune late hath thrown
Your lot, I beg you, deem your own;
And what my humble home and stores
Can offer, is as freely yours."

XXV.

No vacillation marked his eye
As the young soldier made reply—
"Sir, since I cannot yield consent
To what's so fairly said and meant,
To vindicate my course will be
The due, at least, of courtesy.
Then hear, while frankly I impart
The wrong which rankles in my heart,
And you yourself shall judgment give,
If those who but for honor live
Can, while such wrong is unredressed,
To truce or treaty yield their breast.
Sent to the South, not more to bear
Dispatches to our leaders there,
Than for my failing health to inhale
The balm upon her healing gale,
I was, my herald's duty done,
Returning to my martial one.
In my own land, where peace abode,
If any where, methought I rode;

And, save a strippling at my side,
Not dreaming harm, alone did ride.
He, but a bugler of the corps,
No sabre at his girdle wore.
Too young to wield a sword in fight,
But yet the bivouac's delight,
He was, to spare his tender age,
Sent on this journey as my page.
This little gleam of peaceful life
Amid dark years of bloody strife,
We were enjoying. Like the birds,
My young companion chirped his words,
Enchanted with the pretty glade
In which was fixed your ambuscade.
Our hearts in peace and gladness sung,
When out your murderous vollies rung;
Our horses killed, ourselves near slain,
Lived but to wear the captive's chain;
And wear it too without the hope
Whose beams to other captives ope.
That we, released by fair exchange,
In glory's fields again might range;
But doomed as hostages to pine,
To shield from danger thee and thine.
I know the ills which soldiers brave—
Defeat, captivity, the grave.
These to confront with cheerful heart
I know too is the soldier's part,
Who should misfortune calmly bear,
As modestly the laurel wear.
But when a captor would impose
Conditions war no longer knows—

When his demands would have me give
Myself a hostage tame to live,—
All chance, all hope, for aye to yield
To serve my country in the field,
And from her troops myself displant,
He asks what honor cannot grant,
And therefore, amongst noble foes,
What honor never should propose;
For can his breast be free from blame
Who would another lure to shame?"

XXVI.

While thus in calm, determined tone,
The youth his fixed resolve made known,
The other's cheek began to glow,
And frowns to gather on his brow.
The offers which he thought had earned
Him thanks, were as disgraceful spurned,
And he himself reproached as for
Waging dishonorable war.
Hence anger mixed with wounded pride,
As to the youth he thus replied.

XXVII.

" What! think'st thou that to civil jars
Belong the rules of foreign wars,
And that my fame should bear the stain
Of ills which swell rebellion's train ?
My band you deem a bandit horde,
My own as scarce a soldier's sword;
But rather let the men whose toil
Hath filled the realm with civil broil,

Whose fell ambition makes them bring
 Their armies 'gainst their lawful king,
 Bear the reproach of each offence
 That springs from times of violence ;
 And unto us the the honor be
 Of pure unshaken loyalty.
 This to preserve we brave the wrong
 The feeble suffer from the strong.
 Yielding what baser hearts prefer
 To the remorseless plunderer,
 We seek the refuge of this wild,
 To keep our honor undefiled.
 But all cannot this shelter share ;
 The spoilers would pursue us here.
 And can you blame, that when we find
 A gage of peace for those behind,
 We should seize on the tempting prey,
 Nor let it easily pass away ?
 Your high connections in the land
 Have firm assurance from my hand,
 That as the friends of me and mine
 Find safety, so shalt thou and thine ;
 That, though they know not where you are.
 You rest secure beneath my care.
 For this they have the pledge of one
 With faith untarnished as the sun ;
 And this, with what else offered you,
 Is all that duty lets me do."

XXVIII.

He turned away, thus having said,
 But sudden at the threshold stayed,

And looked with an inquiring eye,
As if the other might reply.
Observing this, the youth rejoined :
" I did not seek to change your mind.
You follow what you deem the best,
And I the dictates of my breast—
A breast which cannot let me pause
In laboring for that noblest cause,
Which hath, e'er since the world began,
Inspired the grandest deeds of man.
In that the vast renown was won
Which crowns the land of Marathon ;
'Twas that which gave the brightest bloom
To glory's wreath on mighty Rome ;
And that confers on England now
The noblest chaplet of her brow.
What is her best baronial deed ?
Why, that achieved at Runnymede.
What eloquence of hers hath rung
The noblest ? That from Chatham's tongue.
Doth not the cause that gilds his words
Now flash effulgent on our swords ?
O yes ! through all recorded time,
Still have the generous and sublime
Wielded their arms and shaped their laws,
To vindicate that good old cause.
O'erwhelmed on every other soil,
It flourished in Britannia's isle.
Maintained by Hambden's sword and tongue,
Adorned by Milton's heavenly song,
Freedom her noblest statue won,
When these grand shores she lit upon.

This vast realm, with its dazzling dome
Of sky, seemed fashioned for her home;
And hither hied, o'er land and sea,
The votaries of liberty.
Derived from those who sought this good,
I boast my Hugonotic blood.
The spirit which made them depart
From their fair France, flowed in my heart
With its first pulse; and as it grew
In strength, that spirit strengthened too.
O then imagine with what charms
It woed me to my country's arms,
And how my soul imbibed its rule
At Valley Forge's noble school,
When to the winter tempest flew
That banner, which the anxious view
Of down-trod man was fixed upon,
With all their hope in Washington.
Huts rude as this in which we stand,
Then held the glory of the land
Village of logs and boards and clay,—
But doomed to shine with brighter ray
In song, than Thebes with all her gates,
The empress of a hundred states!
In that great school 'twas mine to learn,
Both what to prize and what to spurn.
I learned, in bosoms nobly good,
That next to God their country stood;
That faithful struggles in her cause
From men and angels won applause;
That some deeds less renown might claim,
And yet their merit be the same.

While here I know I cannot ride
Triumphant through the battle's tide—
Not with my corps at glory fly—
That corps, the army's lance and eye.
The humble task which here must strain
My prowess, is to break my chain:
Pity, perhaps, contrivance, gold,
Fortune, which seldom fails the bold,
With just success may crown my aim,
To reach once more the fields of fame.
And if I perish—let me die,
Perchance my country, with a sigh,
May honor one who fell so young
In striving to redress her wrong.
And I shall most my fate deplore,
Because I could not serve her more."

XXIX.

As he pronounced these ardent words
His face glowed like a demigod's;
Nor when he shed the Python's blood,
Apollo more majestic stood;
Nor spread his brow more nobly fair,
Nor brighter flowed his curling hair.
Not Hamilton unmoved could view
Such conduct high, such courage true,
But with emotion bade adieu.
And the young soldier sought again
Solace in the Mæonian strain.

XXX.

Meanwhile the convalescent page
Confinement bore as birds their cage;

Blithesome sometimes, he sometimes pined
To roam unfettered as the wind.
His care and cure, an humbler work,
Was left to those upon the fork.
His keepers often through the day
Amused him with their children's play;
And sometimes now, his strength to try,
He watched with them the deer-stands nigh.
Where'er these little wanderings led,
The mighty oaks above him spread,
Or forest poplar's towering pride,
Or laurel on the mountain side,
Or pathless wild, or babbling stream,
Turned on his home his sad day dream.
O how he wished the darksome mound,
Which rose on every side around,
Could somewhere sink and give to view
Potomac's wide expanse of blue!
Yet soft, though sad, its azure light
Beamed on his intellectual sight.
Distinct in memory's eye he sees
When first it glimmers through the trees,
As on the wooded path he speeds,
Which straightest to the river leads
Emerging on the open plain,
He nears the dizzy cliffs again,
And quick his sparkling eyes explore
The dwindled groups along the shore
His bugle sounds its clearest note,
They cluster to the ready boat,
Sail o'er the waves in sunset dyed,
While music lulls the slumbering tide.

XXXI.

His father, leader of the strain,
A wanderer from romantic Spain,
Led by kind fortune to a door
That ne'er was closed against the poor,
Chanced with his music to delight
The master of the mansion bright.
Won by the bounties of his hand,
He quickly joined his music band,
Married, and children crowned his joy,
And Carlos was his first-born boy.
As the bright child auspicious grew
They made him a musician too,
And 'twas the ladies' pleasing cares,
Well to instruct his tender years.
He thus grew like a gentle flower,
Which, nourished in a lady's bower,
Imbibes soft fragrance from her sigh,
And tender radiance from her eye.

XXXII.

Though such a pet at such a home,
He still evinced a taste to roam;
And when the stirring drum was beat
To rouse the country's martial heat,
And he beheld the troopers gay
Prance on their steeds in proud array.
He begged he might to battles go
And for Hussars his bugle blow.
His patrons kind would not restrain
An ardor, which perhaps might gain

Distinction for his riper age,
Beyond the station of a page;
And though it cost them a soft tear,
They let him go beneath the care
Of their young cousin, Harry Lee,
A bugler in his cavalry.
Beside that famous partisan,
Continual in the army's van,
He grew adventurous in the fray,
And in the camp and quarters gay.
Clear at the charge his bugle rung,
Blithe at the jolly mess he sung,
And soon the very darling grew,
Of officers and soldiers too.

XXXIII.

And now by cruel fortune thrown
A prisoner on the mountains lone,
His temper sweet and spirit gay,
Won to his captors' hearts away.
They listened with attentive ear,
His tales of peace and war to hear;
And he by skilful question drew
Intelligence of all they knew
About the posture of affairs,
Their future hopes, their present cares.

XXXIV.

And now his wounds completely cured,
His health, and almost strength restored,
He begged permission to attend
As page, his officer and friend.

They said, they grieved he would not stay,
But to oblige him, would convey
His wish to their superior, who
To grant it would be pleased, they knew.

XXXV.

He felt, this prospect in his eyes—
His hope renewed, his spirits rise—
Lovelier the wild appeared to glow,
Brighter the mountain stream to flow,
And every hill and vale was dressed
In the gay sunshine of his breast.

THE MAID OF THE DOE.

CANTO SECOND.

THE MAID OF THE DOE.

CANTO SECOND.

THE MAIDEN.

I.

O YE of earth who sadly dream,
And mourn her hastening to decay,
Look, hath the morning lost a beam
That crowned her on creation's day?
And when, flashed through the warm sun-light,
Earth's wheeling regions glide in shade;
Shine not the wondrous stars as bright
As on the evening they were made?
Doth not the moon still punctual range
Through every loveliness of change,—
And still each planet's beauteous face
Bespangle her appointed place?

II.

Why more degenerate deem the earth
Than the bright sisters of her birth?

O no! like them a radiant star,
She shines when seen like them afar;
And keeps like them her beaten track
Along the glittering Zodiac.
Still o'er her pours the sun in turn
The seasons from his golden urn;
Waked by his beams her breezes blow,
Led by the moon her oceans flow,
And azure gleams the mountain's head,
And verdantly the valleys spread;
As when the first sweet Sabbath shone
On all the work that God had done.

III.

And such as at the primal dawn
The wild, where followed by her fawn,
Down from her father's cabin strayed
The lone and lovely mountain maid.
Though steep and rough the ridge's side,
Onward the graceful creatures glide,
Nor which more light and smooth appears,
The maiden's motion or the deer's.

IV.

Around their path—(for to the glade
They sought, the deer a path had made—
Sagacious foresters that range
Respondent to the weather's change,
When wet and cold, the sunny hills,
When hot and dry, the shaded rills)—
Around their path October threw
The various beauty of its hue.

His crimson leaves the dogwood showed,
In milder tint the maple glowed,
In yellow pale the poplar stood,
And, glory of the Autumn wood,
The hickory boughs profusely strown,
Seemed, as the sun translucent shone
In their thin leaves of tasteful mould,
To light their steps with lamps of gold,
But softened, and by glimpses seen
Through mossy trunks and boughs of green.

V.

When'er the maiden paused to view
Some beauty of peculiar hue,
Her dumb companion cropt the grass,
And aromatic sassafras.
And thus they roamed the sylvan shade.
Enjoying each what God had made
For either's good, to each more dear
Because of her companion near.
For ever as the maid would go
From where she paused, she called her doe—
“Come, Minnie, come!” Nor long when gone
The fragrant herb could tempt the fawn
To stay, but with light bound 'twould run
To follow Flora Hamilton.

VI.

As to the stream, which frolicked through
The mountain vale, they nearer drew,
In grander growth above them stood
The hoary Titans of the wood—

Briareuses, their hundred arms
 They'd brandished in a thousand storms,
 And held their giant heads unblenched,
 Though with the scars of thunder trenched,
 And each upon his body wears
 The wrinkles of a thousand years;
 And moss, displayed in varying whims,
 Tattoos their sides and decks their limbs.

VII.

Blithe by these rooted giants go
 The fawn-like nymph and maiden doe;
 And now upon their pathway smiled
 Another wanderer of the wild.
 "O sparkling brook," the maid begun,
 "Still making music as you run,
 Let me and Minnie go along
 To listen to your plaintive song—
 We sylvan ones, we lonely three,
 Companions for an hour may be.
 I come moreo'er some flowers to ask,
 Which it hath been your daily task
 To water, and through frosty night
 To shield in veiling mist from blight—
 To Minnie herbs that freshest live,
 And floral gems to Flora give;
 And from your rock-carved goblet's brink,
 Let us those spilling diamonds drink."

VIII.

She said: and standing by the ledge
 Of mossy stone, whose curbing edge

For the bright streamlet made a vase,
Bent to the brim her blooming face.
As she the liquid mirror sips
The shadowed press the living lips,
And ne'er before in kisses sweet
Did lips as fresh and rosy meet.
The cheek on that which shone below
Could only find its lovely glow;
The eyes above unconscious gaze
On those alone which match their rays;
And only like her brow could beam
Its fair reflection in the stream.

IX.

Not long the mountain mirror holds
This beauty in its crystal folds,
It vanished as a rose's pressed
By winds a moment o'er its breast;
Or as when the o'er hanging moon
Is hidden by a cloud too soon;
Or evening's blush, or glittering star,
Fades from the sky or strays too far.
Sweeter than these in bloom and beam,
Her face was lifted from the stream;
And glad together wended on
The brook, the virgin, and the fawn.
Singing with one, with one the maid
Exchanged caresses as she strayed,
And frequent as they went along
Her prattle mingled with her song.

“I wish, my Minnie, you could tell
What 'tis that strikes your power of smell.
I see your actions plainly say,
Something has passed along this way
Which you would have me note—Let's see—
Yes—these must human footsteps be—
My father's? No! He is at home.
Some hunter down the vale doth roam—
And yet his gun we should have heard;
For here the mountain's finest bird
Feeds, drums, and his dark ruff displays,
Upon these Indian summer days.
Yet this explains, bright streamlet, why
So few our path have strutted nigh
On this soft morn. I'm glad, at least,
That naught hath frightened from the feast
Thy berries give, the florid bird
Whose chirp we have continual heard,
And form beheld, a meteor pass
Reflected in thy breast of glass.
And O those other winged ones too,
Of heavenly note and heavenly hue,
Who come on winter's melting wing,
Heralds and images of spring;
And linger by the falling leaf
To soothe with tint and song our grief,—
I'm glad that still before my eye
They fit like floating flakes of sky.
Sing, pretty ones, lest I forget
That ye are earthly creatures yet.
But, sparkling stream, too far you rove,
My walk is bounded by this grove.

My father says these strolls of mine
Must have their limit at this pine.
This hemlock tree, which somewhat lone
Stands from the rest, a verdant cone.
Beyond, he says, the thickening shade
Shelter for wolf and bear was made;
So you must wander hence alone—
We'll rest awhile, and then return."

X.

This said, the moss of a huge stone
The lady gently pressed,
And 'gainst the tree her person thrown,
In graceful ease did rest.
Her bonnet dropt, the fillet slipped,
In clusters fell the curls,
And down her arm the ringlets dripped
Below her bracelet's pearls.
Some their light shadows on her cheek,
Some on her brow did throw,
And wandered some in hazel streak,
Upon her bosom's snow.
And over all this fairy shroud
A softer beauty throws,
As through the fringes of a cloud
The evening lovelier glows.
And thus in musing mood she leant
Against the shading tree,
While onward her companions went—
One on its endless journey sent,
And one to crop the herb intent,
As beautiful as free.

IX.

But not alone the maiden stayed;
For deeper in the lofty shade,
That morn, her father's captive strayed,
And while returning chanced to hear
The accents of a lady near,
And went through screening boughs to see
Whose the melodious tones might be.

X.

His eye upon the nymph was thrown
Just as she pressed the mossy stone;
As bonnet dropped and fillet slipped,
And the soft shower of ringlets dripped.
By the bright apparition struck
Rooted to earth his footsteps stuck,
Passed o'er his soul a rapture-blight,
And every sense was lost in sight.

XI.

While thus transfixed in sweet amaze
He stood, and naught could do but gaze,
He saw their lids long lashes rise
And upward roll the lustrous eyes.
O then it seemed a sweeter heaven
Than that to which they turned, was given
To this rapt view; and through the grove
A dearer light than from above
Was softly shed; and presently
The lips were parted sighingly,
And gently stirred with numbered words,
Half-warbled like the song of birds.

SONG.

1

My heart, why,
With all this loveliness around,
Dost sigh?
In leaf-mosaic worked, the ground
Doth lie;
The stream with music in each bound
Leaps by;
And with its softest glory heaven is crowned.

2

Bosom rest!
Had Eve the first with Paradise
Been blest,
Would have exhaled unconscious sighs
Her breast,
To find in never-heard-of eyes
Expressed
Emotions in her heart untaught to rise?

3

What hath fate
Left for my good, my joy undone?
Of late
Father and mother, both nor one
Can sate
The wish I feel to have my own
Playmate—
Child of the wild, indeed, thy lot's too lone!

XII.

The warble of the vision bright
 Was e'en more fairy than the sight.
 At times arose the wild, clear note,
 Like that trilled from the mock-bird's throat,
 When on his starry wings uptossed
 In ecstasy he pours his lay;
 Then in the cadence of the dove,
 Which Indians call the pigeon lost,*
 From its lone song of plaintive love,
 It died melodiously away.

XIII.

O yes! the sounds, or trilled, or purled
 In links of music round the world—
 Those in the air the sky-lark leaves,
 Those that the swan on ocean breathes,
 Zephyr and rill that singing rove,
 The countless voices of the grove,
 From each was ta'en its sweetest note
 To store with music woman's throat,
 As from the earth and sky unfolded
 The loveliest shapes, the loveliest hues,
 We see into her figure moulded,
 We see her form of grace suffuse.
 But crowning flower of earth, red rose,
 And pearls, pure treasures of the sea,
 And brightest star at eve that glows,
 And moon, in all thy radiancy,

* Putche ishoba—Pigeon that is lost, is the name given by the Chickasaws to the turtle dove, from its resemblance to the wild pigeon, and its plaintive note.

How pale, how hard, how cold ye are,
With her warm beauties to compare!

XIV.

As to the youth these fancies throng,
Enchanted with the sight and song,
He heard hard by a crashing sound,
And saw the doe in frantic bound.

And now the stream-bank shook and rung,
As down before the virgin sprung
A panther huge, but missed the deer,
And on the unlooked for object near,
The dazzling vision of the maid,
Glared, and close-crouched, a moment laid ;
But instantly the soldiers' blade

Was buried in his brain.

The lady hardly felt afraid
Before the beast was slain.

And scarcely rose she from her seat,
When graceful kneeling at her feet,
The youth for pardon sued—
“ O pardon that I stood so long,
Enchanted with your face and song ;

And pardon, too, imbrued
My sword unbidden in the blood
Of this fierce subject of the wood,
Crouched down before his queen !
But there was rudeness in his stare,
And danger lurking in his glare,
And treachery in his mien ;
And death his mildest doom should be
That dares to look offence at thee.”

XV.

All passed so quick—the startled deer,
The panther's spring so fierce and near,
His fearful crouch to spring again,
The flashing sword, the savage slain,
Instead of his green eyes to see
A handsome soldier on his knee,
Rendering his homage gracefully—
All formed so wide and swift a range
Through terrible to pleasing change,
That well it might the maid amaze,
And make it now her turn to gaze.

The plumed casque in homage doffed,
Displayed his short locks curling soft
Around his forehead broad and high;
And in the beaming of his eye,
'Twere hard to tell if she could see
More gentleness or chivalry.

Not long she fully met its glance
Ere she was wakened from her trance;
For delicacy soon a charm
Supplied more potent than alarm.
But while the blush suffused her face,
Mounted the spirit of her race,
And with a mien composed and high,
And gentle smile, she made reply.

XVI.

“ I must forgive you, though 'twas wrong
Unseen to listen to my song;

And that you this intruder slew
So promptly, my best thanks are due.
My bosom owns, sir, as it should,
The sacred debt of gratitude.
But now arise—Indeed I feel
'Tis I whom it becomes to kneel,
To Heaven my fervent thanks to pay,
For the protection given to day."

XVII.

E'en while she spoke with swimming eyes
She raised her visage to the skies,
And with a look serene, as they
To their great Ruler seemed to pray.
Then, to the soldier turning, "Come,"
She said, "you must attend me home.
I feel too much o'ercome alone
To go with my poor frightened fawn.
Although till now unseen, I know
You are my king's, my kinsmen's foe,
The captive of my father's spear,
The patient of my mother's care.
But, heaven-directed through the wild
This morning to preserve their child,
Your past relations with them end,
Merged, as I trust, in that of friend."

XVIII.

Seal of her words her hand she gave,
Which to his lips he pressed,
And answer, mingled gay and grave,
Becomingly expressed.

And arm in arm the woody maze
 They slowly wended through;
 And much the Indian summer praise,
 In its redundant veil of haze
 And robe of rainbow hue.
 But the soft joy that chased their glooms,
 Their sweetest thoughts that stirred,
 The light, which all the soul illumines,
 Like sunbeams sparkling in the plumes
 Of birds of Paradise—
 Of these, they never said a word,
 Though in their gentled tones 'twas heard
 And sparkled in their eyes.
 On rapture's wings as borne they go,
 Short seemed the way, the mountain low,
 Too soon, O twice too soon for each
 The lofty Eagle's Perch they reach.
 The daughter seeks the mother's breast,
 And he his place of lone unrest.

XIX.

But as the open door he neared,
 A form within its shade appeared,
 And soon he knew with glad surprise
 The sparkling glance of Carlos' eyes.
 With sickness and despair beset
 At parting, now in health they met,
 And hope, and due exchanges made
 Of happy greeting, Laurens said :
 " O I rejoice to see you here,
 And from your brow so glad and clear,

Flashes my soul across
Such beam of hope as erst it knew,
When battle charge your bugle blew,

For Harry Lee's light horse.

○ haste unclasp the secret book,
Whose title sparkles in your look,
In order every page display,
And do it in your minstrel way;
For not since Camden's day of fear
Aught of our arms hath reached my ear."

XX.

The boy replied: "That day indeed
Did make the hearts of patriots bleed;
Yet in the realm so deep blood-stained,
Champions of freedom still remained,
Who flung her banner to the air,
Above defeat, above despair.
Sumner and Davie and Davidson,

Hovering on van and flanks,
Where'er the victor armies turn
Cut off their straggling ranks;
And from morasses of Pedee,
And the deep shades of soft Santee,
Darts Marion on their rear;

And still his files bold Sumter fills,
And like their torrents from his hills

Rushing, their posts uprear.
Younger than these, but brave and true
As ever freedom's falchion drew,
Pickens, the mountain border keeps,
And on the foe terrific leaps,

As from those wilds the panther bold
Springs down upon the shepherd's fold.

Thus the great Carolinian plain,
On which they thought secure to reign,
Is still a theatre of strife,
Were want and weapons ravage life.

XXI.

“ Nor even patriot hearts endure
To let them Georgia hold secure.
Rather than bow to royal sway,
Her bravest warriors climbed their way,
Over the Allegany's crest,
And found a refuge in the West.
But still their hearts to Georgia turned,
And ever for her freedom burned.
Leader of these the gallant Clarke
Now calls them from their forests dark,
And with an eagle's swoop they go
To pounce upon their fortressed foe.
But all their prowess skilful Brown
Baffled before Augusta town ;
And Furgerson is sent to meet
And cut them off in their retreat.
But O uncertain human fate!
This leader, great among the great,
With his brave band the fortune shared,
Which they for others deemed prepared.

XXII.

“ Not westward far from this Plateau
The lucid streams of Holston flow ;

Through fertile hills its length it trails
The architect of lovely vales.
Fairest, perhaps, of all of these,
Is one, which, from its aspen trees,
And cabins on its bordering hill,
Has caught the name of Aspenville.

There in the sway that valor gives
The terror of the tories lives—
Campbell his name, who happy led
The sister to his bridal bed,
Of the great Henry—he who first
Let from his lip of wonder burst
Defiance in that startling tone
That shook the tyrant on his throne.

His sister, had her husband stood
In need of aught to warm the blood
With all the zeal the times require,
Had through his bosom breathed the fire.
For hers, e'en as her brother's eye,
They say, with courage flashes high,
And like her brother's hath a charm
Her voice the coldest heart to warm.

But he from Scottish chiefs derives
The valor that adorned their lives,
And to him with his blood 'tis said
There came an old Ferrara blade,
Which through long generations gone
Hath born renown from sire to son.
This flashing now in freedom's cause
Around the chief his warriors draws;
A hardy race, whose sires the breeze,
From Erin by the Hebrides,

And Albyn's hills, to this new world
 Blew o'er the ocean tempest-curled.
 Uprooted from their ancient home,
 'Twould seem they ne'er enough could roam ;
 For farther and farther still they press
 Upon the Indian's wilderness,
 Although at every step they go
 They feel the tomahawk and bow.

In this fierce warfare trained and tried,
 Hardship and danger they deride.
 No tents or wagons they prepare,
 No magazines employ their care.
 Their rifles cleaned, their bullets run,
 Their wallets filled, their saddles on,
 They mount their steeds and dash ahead,
 The trees their tent, the leaves their bed ;
 And every man, a hunter keen,
 Finds every wood a magazine.

XXIII.

“ And now the signal for a raid,
 Has flown along the forest shade,
 Where Holston's fairest vales expand,
 And o'er the tops of Cumberland
 Campbell aloft his banner rears,
 And Cleveland's, Shelby's, and Sevier's,
 And Williams's above their brave
 And mounted rifle rangers wave.

Down from their Highland wilds they go
 To strike Augusta, a depot
 Of Indian presents, stores and arms,
 Which add to honor's booty's charms.

But when they hear of Clarke's retreat,
And Furgerson's advance, to meet

The last at once they go.

He from King's Mountain's wooded crest,
With lion eye and lion breast,

Glares on the approaching foe.

He saw in columns three their force,
Each now dismounted from its horse,

And each five hundred strong,

The mountain's different sides around
To where his thousand warriors crowned

Its summit, stalk along.

In poured his fire Cleveland first,
And from the ranks opposing burst

The blaze of musketry;

And quickly through the curling smoke,
The glittering points of bayonets broke

Upon their enemy.

The riflemen can but retire,

Yet pour again a murderous fire,

And scarce a step recede,

Before upon the British rear,

They Shelby's ringing rifles hear,

And see their foemen bleed.

Instant the bands of Furgerson

On Shelby turn the volleying gun,

And with the bayonet rush—

As quick to meet their charging spring,

Again the fatal rifles ring,

But shun the bayonet's push.

Not far their charge the Britons pressed,

When Campbell reached the mountain's crest,

Now wreathed in war clouds dun,
When from their edge the rifle blaze,
And balls again the foe amaze,

Again with slaughter stun.
The wounded corps undaunted yet,
Turn furious with the bayonet,

Upon this column new;
And from the hill's contested ridge,
The levelled musket's bristled edge,

The rifle rangers threw.
But in succession as before,
The mountain bands advance and pour

Their showers of death again:
And still the foe to conquer burns,
Though less and less alert he turns,

Encumbered with his slain.
By hunters roused, the grisly bear
Thus at the nearest to his lair

Makes his terrific fling;
They at his breast their weapons launch,
And fly, when fiercely on his haunch

Their gallant bear-dogs spring.
Instant the savage turns—but then
Come the assailing hunters, when

He flies at them again;
The dogs on him as quickly turn,
Again he wheels the dogs to spurn,
And thus the alternate combats burn,

Till buried in his brain,
Some weapon rolls the monster on the plain.
Thus worried, wounded, bleeding, still
The brave provincials held their hill,

Until their leader died.
Then down their well-worn arms they laid,
And his whole host were captive made,
Or lying at his side.

XXIV.

“Again their homes by hill and vale
The mountain warriors sought,
Where all was joyous save the wail
Of those they captive brought.
But scarce so great the prisoner’s woes
Through wilds unknown to tramp.
As those which Earl Cornwallis knows,
And Earl Cornwallis’s camp.
A quarter of his army lost,
Disease and want among his host,
Gaunt famine in his van and fear,
Marion and Sumter in his rear—
What could he do, the mighty Earl,
But his advancing standard furl,
And bid his drums reluctant beat
To Camden back a sad retreat,
And leave to Davie’s hovering wing,
His boasted conquest for his king?”

XXV.

“Glad, glad indeed your tidings are!”
Laurens exclaimed, “and hope’s fair star
Gilds with its glittering beam once more
My native Carolinian shore—”

XXVI.

As he these words of rapture spoke,
The sound of coming footsteps broke

Their conference; and soon upon
Their rustic floor stood Hamilton.
With much emotion he begun:
“ I have, sir, but this moment known
Of all that happened in the wild
This morning—that you saved my child.
Words are too weak, too poor to show
The thanks we feel, the thanks we owe;
And yet so strained my state, must needs
My words be richer than my deeds.
I need not, must not now explain
From link to link the moral chain
That binds the members of the band,
Which I but only half command.
That I should bid you now be free,
They might reproach as treachery—
Yet deeper should I feel defiled
To bind the hand that saved my child.
I, therefore, throw myself on thee—
Thou who saved Flora, rescue me.
Agree on your parol to stay
With us till after new-year’s day.
That you may readier consent,
Know to the South your corps is bent,
And scarcely can it reach Pedee,
Ere you shall join your Colonel Lee.
I scarce need add, your bugler here
I also mean your lot to share.

XXVII.

“ Enough—I take,” the youth rejoined.
“ Your offer with a grateful mind.

That I the service sweet discharged,
Which much your kindness hath enlarged,
Was my good fortune, which 'tis mine
To thank for Providence divine.
But not for me, its instrument,
So much was the sweet mercy sent.
As for the mother, whose kind care
Prolonged to me this vital air—
'Twas she that healed the guided arm,
Who saved the lovely maid from harm."

XXVI.

'Twas plain to see how this must end:
The soldiers called each other friend,
And by strong sympathies allied,
Shared the same board and fireside.
By chivalry and beauty blest,
The cabins of the mountain crest,
Rude villa, which the floating cloud
Wrapt often like a winding shroud,
Yet with the beauteous ones within,
And the majestic scene without,
Had more of joy and less of sin,
Than frolic palace halls about.
For mirth or song or tale beguiles
The hours as they gently flow,
And he, the urchin god of smiles,
Was busy with his golden bow.



THE MAID OF THE DOE.

CANTO THIRD.

THE MAID OF THE DOE.

CANTO THIRD

THE STORM

I.

O why were all the beauteous things
That bloom on earth and beam in heaven,
To gild the mind's imaginings,
And charm the earthlier senses given ?

Why should the Lyre's enchanting star,
Why the soft Pleiades, from hence
Myriads of Earth's round journeys far,
Shed down on man sweet influence ?

Why should the flowers that feed the bee,
And banquet flower-like butterflies,
Touch human hearts with sympathy,
And be the food of smiles and sighs ?

O are the pantings of those hearts
 Too proud, when with the hope they beat,
 That all creation's distant parts
 In man, as in a centre, meet ?

For his embracing thought combines
 The great, the small, the near, the far,
 There by the sun the glow-worm shines,
 There by the floweret smiles the star.

There song birds of the florid hue
 Gleam with the meteors in their flight,
 And swans upon the ocean's blue,
 Float by the silver queen of night.

And for man's banquet knowledge spreads
 The planets with their moons and rings,
 And every herb on which he treads,
 And insect with its glittering wings.

He knows, enjoys and feels them all
 For power, for blessing, or for curse ;
 And must he perish as they fall,
 This centre of the universe ?

Whose fancy, of the soaring wings,
 No height can tire, no spell can lull
 From weaving all created things
 Into one infinite beautiful.

Whose vision of a higher day
 Than round this little planet runs,
 Sees in the pallid Milky Way,
 The dim dust kindle into suns.

And through them deems the glimpses fall
Of increase, eternal light
From the divine Eye watching all
The works of infinite love and might.

Man, living soul, in this thy task
High, endless, dear, shalt thou be stopped?
No! life is but thy mortal mask,
And death the cloud in which 'tis dropped.

O 'tis to lift thee with such hope,
That to thy faculties are given
To take creation in their scope,
And feel each charm of earth and heaven.

Hence too between the world above,
And every age and clime of ours,
An universal speech of love
And light hath been in stars and flowers.

And man, here quickly ending, seeks
His fates in orbs that endless roll,
And through each loveliest floweret speaks
Each loveliest feeling of his soul.

Then deem it not an idle care
To cherish aught that beauteous grows,
From sky to earth an accent dear,
Breathes from the bosom of a rose.

But with hearts ever grateful, cull
The blessings to your pathway given,
And look upon the beautiful
As on an aspect fresh from heaven.

Then little boots it if ye tread
The sombre wild or glittering street;
For still the sky is o'er your head,
And still the earth beneath your feet.

II.

So deem the maid and soldier now
Upon the mountain's wintry brow.
Before the frost those tints have fled,
Which lately glowed around its head,
As if the vapors which the morn
Had shed its blushing glories on,
Had as they melted left their hues
Upon the leaves in rosy dews.

III.

Now the gray branches glittering bare,
Chafed by the rude wind, lash the air,
Around the lofty crest of stone,
The snow storm's dreary heralds groan,
Far in the west the rising cloud
From peak to peak extends its shroud.
The ravens gather where they best
May shelter by the mountain crest;
The eagles scent the rising gale,
And in depressed gyrations sail,
And seldom now the sunbeam flings
Its radiance on their golden wings,
So thick across the darkened sky,
The tempest-summoned snow clouds fly.

IV.

The mountain dwellers from their home
Remarked these signals of the storm.
Nor toil, nor skill to be prepared
Gainst the rough season had they spared.
Hands used to bridle-reins and swords,
Had slung the axe and riven boards,
And they who marshalled fighting men,
Toiled in the structure of a pen.
Now, as the freezing tempest came,
They looked upon each humble frame,
Saw that the stays were rightly placed,
And every weight pole snugly braced,
That in their sheds their scanty stock
Was housed against the tempest's shock,
And stacks of pea vine and wild hay
Were fenced against the rude wind's sway.

V.

Nor do the loving ones forget
The pansies, rose, and mignonette,
For, thus far, had their tender care
Preserved them from the nipping air.
Now with the skill that love imparts,
And care, the joy of loving hearts,
They weave of evergreens a bower,
To shelter from the frozen shower
Those soft and pure interpreters
Between his conscious heart and hers.
For ne'er from either's lip did melt
A word to tell what either felt;

They acted as if each believed
The fates of love in heaven were weaved,
And angels brought about on earth
The matches there that had their birth ;
And their life's strangely blended path
Had strengthened much the pleasing faith.
As now their gentle toil they pressed
Their breasts' pure joy their looks confessed.
What was to them the coming storm,
Save closer sympathies to form
In their rich hearts ? The mutual eyes
Looked kinder for the threatening skies,
And gentle words were gentler poured,
Contrasted with the storm which roared
In wild bursts from the dells beneath,
And bowed the forest with its breath.

VI.

Now done whate'er their hands could do
To keep all snug the tempest through,
They looked upon their human nest,
And at the mountain's sheltering crest,
And on the hurricane which shook
Almost that rampart of their nook.
As when the seas their billows form
In ranks tremendous against the storm,
And the fair ship is trim and tight,
To buffet ocean in his might,
The sailors 'mid the tempest dark,
Look proudly on their gallant bark,
While masts and spars its fury brave,
And baffled howls the angry wave ;

So from their storm-defying peak,
These see around the tempest break,
And feel secure, though lifted high
'Mid all the terrors of the sky.

VII.

And now the scud is driving fast,
And snow-flakes drift upon the blast,
So light along its fury hurled,
'Twould seem they ne'er could reach the world
But quickly faster showering,
Heavier the tempest flapped its wing,
Until so dense their fleeces form,
They seem to smother up the storm,
And heaven itself to men below
Appears precipitant in snow.

VIII.

The dwellers in the wilderness,
The shelter of their cabin bless;
And now with eyes exultant see
The well furred deer skin tapestry.
But how shall winter's leafless trees
Protect the birds in times like these?
How keep the deer the life blood warm,
Through all the ice of such a storm?
A thousand nooks the warblers know
To shield them from the freezing snow.
The deer in beds of leaves or sedge,
In thicket or by rocky ledge,
Lie from the stalking hunter hid
Beneath the fleecy coverlid,

Unless he chance to wander near
Enough to note the quivering ear.

IX.

“But how can mortals find their joy
Aught in such season to destroy?”
Remarked the dame with glowing look,
As in the converse part she took.
“When all quail at the wrath above,
O should not all on earth be love?
Such are the times to feel the span,
How little between beast and man,
To feel the electric links which bind
All other creatures to mankind.
O they, the mute and musical,
The furred and feathered animal,
Think how they often cry and groan
With ills exactly like our own—
Think how their paths on earth and air
Are like mankind’s beset with care!
Sickness and want, mishap, decay,
The enemies that tease and slay,
The loss of mates and of their young,
And endless tyrannies of the strong,
Beset with ill their days of breath,
And bring at last eternal death.

“The storm, which bird and beast enrols
With mortals in its frozen folds,
O let it mortals teach, at least,
To feel sometimes to bird and beast
As fellow-things, which should receive
The dues which fellow-sufferings give!

This night I should almost deplore
To turn a panther from the door."

X.

"True, madam, but the hunter's path
Is like the soldier's, through the wrath
Of elements—nor wind nor cloud
Subdues man's spirit brave and proud.
But his designs to aid and form,
He bends the genius of the storm.

"Witness the band that marched so far
Through the drear wastes of Canada—
Wastes, where no dwelling decked the plain,
But all was winter's dreadful reign,
And where the dismal, empty wood
Held scarce a squirrel for their food.

"I've often heard old Morgan say,
That seldom through the live long day,
His riflemen could aught perceive
A mouthful to the troops to give,
Save sometimes on the tree tops high,
A little squirrel they'd espy,
And mainly by his glittering eye.
At once the precious little spark
Became the fatal rifle's mark;
And oft the starving marksman clutched
The creature ere the ground it touched,
And made a mouthful of the thing,
E'en while with life 'twas quivering."

XI.

"Then you know Morgan. Let me hear
His history; for much I fear,

That even now he leads a band
 To waste my prostrate native land ;
 And rumor says he has suffered wrong,
 His bosom to embitter long
 Against the royal officers."

XII.

" Nor in this, Madam, rumor errs.
 But 'tis not in the valiant breast,
 That dark resentment harbors best ;
 And Morgan, to his lasting praise,
 Has never let his anger blaze,
 'Gainst one of all those officers,
 Whom war has made his prisoners.

" Though lowly born and rudely bred,
 His heart is kind, and sage his head,
 Nor have the patriot bands possessed,
 A truer or a braver breast—
 True to the chief, true to the cause,*
 But nothing squeamish as to laws.

" New Jersey boasts his birth. But young,
 He roved Virginia's wilds among,
 And laid, at length, his cabin floor
 In the broad vale of Shenandoah.
 Thence, fond of enterprise and gain,
 'To Braddock's war he drove his wain.
 'Twas there a felon's fate did bow,
 His now elate and laurelled brow ;
 'Twas then was bound with felon band
 His often since victorious hand ;

* See a sketch of Morgan's life and character, in the Appendix to Lee's Memoirs, vol. 1.

There that high form, which since hath rushed
Up to the cannon, while out gushed
From their volcanic mouths a storm
Of fire and iron—aye, that form,
Then rolled down lifeless by a stun
Caught at the muzzle of a gun,
And yet stained with its powder flash,
That form was tortured by the lash!

“My indignation’s bursting flame
Forgive, dear lady—Let the blame
Fall on the petty tyrants, who
Make me, I fear, seem rude to you.”

XIII.

“Go on, my friend, I love the truth
To nature shown in glowing youth.
But in what portion of his wars
Did Morgan get those powder scars?”

XIV.

“’Twas when, from cloud and cannon poured,
A double storm Quebec endured,
When brave Montgomery’s shroud of snow,
The tears of nations caused to flow,
He rushed the foremost mountaineer
Upon the outmost barrier,
And as the dauntless stormer tore
Away the blazing garniture,
Hot from a gun its sulphurous breath
Made him a moment taste of death.”*

[* See Appendix, Note A.]

XV.

“But tell me by what steps became
The wagoner this son of fame?
Because it is that early strife
Which makes the turning point of life,
Whose oft omitted history,
Is worthiest curiosity.”

XVI.

“Perhaps it is,” the youth replied.
“But who can throw the veil aside,
And show the germ that secret grows,
And whence the hidden fountain flows?
The sports we deem but wasting time,
The brawls we blame as roads to crime,
Oft nourish energies sublime.

“Those who the course of Morgan saw
Twixt Braddock’s and the present war,
Deemed him a victim whom the law
Had built, at least, its prisons for.

“His brawls, if we may trust to fame,
Bestowed on Battletown its name—
In such athletic feats he won
And wore the palm as champion.

“But when the annual season came
For hunting, he pursued the game.
Foremost in the far wilds. Alone,
Unsheltered, save by jutting stone,
Or antique tree, or tent of bark,
For months, through daylight and the dark,
He’d chase the bear, the panther slay,
Strike down the elk or stag at bay,

And deem no life so sweet, so good,
As that lone wandering in the wood.

“ O who can tell what dreams might come
O'er slumbers in his forest home—
What bright, majestic nature wrought
By visions on his waking thought ?

“ Resembled much his pupilage,
That of the old heroic age—
The roving life, the brawling feast,
The war with savage and wild beast.

“ But when the revolution came,
A nobler object lit the flame,
Of aspiration in his breast ;
And of his mountaineers the best,
The bravest, stoutest, gathered round,
And sought with him the battle ground,
While tramping steeds and flashing blades
Yet startled Cambridge's classic shades.

“ O'er all the bands assembled then,
Shone Morgan and his riflemen,
For hardihood and statue high,
And quickness of the hand and eye ;
And their bronzed aspects, flowing hair,
Their Indian stride and Indian air,
Their hunting shirts of tanned deer hide,*
With fringe and tassels streaming wide,
The wild skin cap and wild bird plume,
Shading their brows with savage gloom,
The tomahawk their skill could wield,
As battle axe in narrow field,

[* See Appendix, Note B.]

Or bury in the distant foe,
 As if an arrow from a bow,
 Besides the perfect skill of all
 To wing with death the rifle ball,
 Drew on the leader and his band
 A gaze of wonder through the land,
 And opened fortune's high career,
 To the adventurous mountaineer.*

“ Except my own, I love no corps
 Than Morgan's in the army more.”

XVI.

“ Yet of your own a single word,
 I never from your lips have heard;”
 Remarked the maid with that soft voice,
 In which the hearts of men rejoice.

“ No, gentlest one, and had I praised
 My own, I fear it had not raised
 In your opinion me or mine..
 The truly bright is sure to shine,
 With its own beams at last. Our swords
 I trust are readier than our words,
 But if your tastes a tale prefer
 Of us, behold our trumpeter.”

XVII.

All the suggestion heard with joy,
 And turned them to the dark eyed boy.
 Instant his aspect brighter beamed,
 And from his upward rolling eye,
 The pure and liquid lustre seemed
 An emanation from on high.

[* See Note B, of this Canto.]

For fancy spread her rainbow plumes,
And touched the soul's electric strings,
And shook away the mortal glooms
In putting on the angel wings.

XVIII.

O, in such hour, could minstrel's art
The visions of his soul impart,
With shape distinct and vivid hue,
As they gleam on his mental view,
We might behold through ages gone
The scenes and men which most adorn
The records of our world and race;
And every beauteous woman's face,
Which through the cloud of works and wars
Beam out as sweet or baleful stars,
As beauteous through the poet's eyes,
As to the hearts they filled with sighs.

And feeble though the power of speech
May be his visions fair to teach,
And heroes and beauties move and shine,
Faltering and faint in measured line,
Yet of all gone who truly live
Save in the life the poets give ?
Whence wake, except from minstrel strings,
Their names our soul's sweet echoings ?
And whence, save from the poet's page
Shine out their deeds from age to age,
With light, which not alone informs
The mind, but soul and bosom warms ?

XIX.

Carlos, whose aspect showed his strain
 Derived from bright and burning Spain.
 Had heard familiar from a child
 His father sing its ballads wild,
 And oft his lonely musing thought
 Fell in the cadences thus caught.
 Now in such measures free he told
 Of Harry Lee's adventure bold,
 Recorded by his country in gold.

CAPTURE OF PAULUS HOOK.

The August sun was setting,
 And in its lustre lay,
 The island town and the forts around,
 And the war-ships in the bay.
 From all, St. George's bannered cross
 Was streaming in the breeze,
 The island Queen an island reign
 Had won this side the seas.
 Manhattan's towered isle was hers.
 Long Island's villaged plain,
 And each islet in the silver set
 Of the armlet of the main.
 And up the Hudson's western shore,
 So wide her troops encamp,
 That almost to the Hackensac
 They hear a horseman's tramp.
 Narrow between these streams the land
 To the arbor stretches down,
 Where Paulus Hook's gay fortress looks
 Secure as London town.

No bark the patriot armies have
To waft them o'er the tide,
And whose the steed with hostile speed
That narrow neck to ride?
The Jersey stream for miles fourteen
Will not a bridge endure,
Although the while scarce thrice a mile
It leaves the Hudson's shore.
Yet by that bridge along the edge
Of hostile camps must go,
The band to take the fort, nor wake
A sentry of the foe.
And by that perilous path again,
Their safety to secure,
With captives ta'en and wounded men
Must seek the friendly shore.
What infantry can dare the march,
What steeds the ramparts force?
The rising sun shall see it done
By Harry Lee's light horse.
Silent beneath the silent stars
Their march they now pursue;
And the horses go as if they know
They must be silent too.
Used by night shades to ambuscades,
And to the charge by day,
The warrior-steeds the warrior men
Instinctively obey.
And darker made by forest shade
Is the rude way they hold,
Scarce see the stars the gay Hussars
Arrayed in green and gold.

But in the dark 'twas droll to mark
Among their martial bands,
Some eight or ten, like market-men,
With baskets in their hands.
You would surmise, to see their guise,
And hear their mimic talk,
They with their wives had all their lives
Sold cabbage in New-York.
But hidden by their rustic shirts
Victorious swords they wore,
And braver men than all the ten
Were not in all the corps.
'Twas halted now for last commands
Around its leader bright,
For now it nears the ground that bears
The dangers of the night.
And his the power to rouse the brave
With martial eloquence,
And while he wins the heart to love
Impresses reverence.
The thirsty ears drink every word
As from his lip it melts,
And you might perceive the bosoms heave
Beneath the sabre belts.
He said: "The chief of all the lands
Where freedom's altars rise,
Has honored you of all his bands
With this bold enterprise.
Remember your indignant words
When Stony Point was stormed,
You said that others reaped the prize
When we the toil performed

And danger braved to shape the way
For them to march to fame.*
Your distant parts to bear your hearts
Could scare their spirit tame.
For what you panted then, is granted
Now to crown your deeds—
A fortress strong to rush upon
And capture with your steeds.
And though adventurous and beset
The narrow way we hold,
Its peril is to cowards more
Than to the calm and bold.
Who never shrink on danger's brink
Their footing seldom miss,
While vacillation's timid step
Is plunged in the abyss.
I've weighed your task, and never ask
More than the brave can do;
Remember when two hundred men
I beat with ten of you.†
The morning's red its glow will shed
Upon an easier deed,
Though higher praise and minstrel lays
Are sure to be its meed.
For though I know misfortune's blow‡
The brave must oft endure,
Its power is vain to cast a stain
Upon my noble corps."

* See Marshall's Life of Washington, vol. 3, p. 377, and Note C to this Canto.

† See Marshall's Life of Washington, vol. 4, p. 72, 73.

[‡ See Appendix, Note C.]

Sparkled their eyes to the jewelled skies,
And shone on every face,
A glow that said, you may see us dead,
But never in disgrace.

The chief beheld how their bosoms swelled

And gave the orders due;
And lit by stars the brave Hussars
Their perilous path pursue.

They keep the track by the Hackensac,
And often down its dells,

They wind to the edge of its marshy sedge
To shun the sentinels.

The neigh of a horse would rouse the force
Of yonder slumbering camp;
We go so near 'tis a drowsy ear
That does not hear our tramp.

But all were deep in tranquil sleep,
And never dreamed that then

So near them went, on conquest bent,
Two hundred mounted men.

Before them all the chieftain goes
Their guardian and their guide;
And 'twas his whim that next to him
Myself that night should ride.

Silent he rode as rapt in thought,
But calmly from his eye,
And quick as throws your golden bird
His glances from the sky,
Fell from his lofty steed his own
Towards each sound that stirred;
But nothing draws his step to pause,
Or from his lips a word.

More tedious now as dangerous less
The devious path we go;
And with joy we heard the sparkling bird
That wakes the morning crow,
And saw the streak of faint light break
Along the eastern gloom,
And in the grey of the dawning day
The hostile ramparts loom.
And now ye gallant troopers
Ye have before your eyes,
Defeat to mar, or victory
To crown your bold emprise.
Not from the fortress far they halt
Within the skreening woods,
And onward go the men disguised
To sell the market goods.
"Halloo!" they cry, and loudly knock
Against the massive gate;
"And must we come so far from home,
Nor find a soul awake?
Make haste and buy our market stuff!
Before the broad day shines,
Our heavy boat must quiet float
Within the rebel lines."
The drowsy sentinel the gate
On grating hinges turns;
"Haste call your caterers! Don't you see
How fast the daylight burns?"
"Halloo!" the sentinel in turn
Exclaims with angry stare;
"Know you, my lads, at whom you bawl
Or know you where you are?"

“Why we must shake you well awake!
Don’t like a booby look,
But haste and tell we’ve come to sell
These things at Paulus Hook.”

“Hands off!” exclaimed the angry man,
“Halloo! here comrades come!
You saucy fellows, you shall take
More kicks than coppers home!”

With that the soldiers hurried down
And tumult stirred the crowd;
“What, would you rob us?” cried the men;
“Huzza!” they shouted loud;

“Press back the gate! They’ll shut us in,
And rifle us by force!
Look there! look there! you well may stare;
‘Tis Harry Lee’s light horse!”

Not from the falcon’s stooping wing
The covey scatters more,
Than did that crowd in tumult loud
From the swift swooping corps.
But vain they fly the steeds so nigh!
As by a whirlwind torn,
The fort’s a waste, and away in haste
Its guardians captive born.
While hurried fast they hear the blast
Of larum, as it speeds
From rank to rank on the Hudson’s bank;
O can it stop the steeds?
With sabres drawn the corps sweeps on,
And many a stalwart corpse
In their path shall lay ere they stop the way
Of Harry Lee’s light horse.

But swifter than the alarm can spread,
And the foe his battle form,
They cross the bridge at the very edge
Of the darkly gathering storm;
And their rich prize as wide the eyes
Ope'd of our army there,
As a fortress ta'en and no one slain,*
Made the brave Britons stare.
And Congress decreed so bold a deed
Should duly honored be,
And had it told in a medal of gold
To the Flower of chivalry.

XX.

As flowed the tale, the maiden's look
Revealed her bosom's clasped book.
Her sire beheld with sore amaze
The earnest rapture of her gaze,
As from the minstrel boy it fell
Oft on the soldier's brow to dwell.
"What, can the rebel stripling
Be weaning her from sire and king?
I listen to their tales to learn
The characters of those who earn
The meed of praise and high command
In the misled, revolted land,
The better to bring down, I trust,
Their power and honor to the dust;

* This is almost literally true of the captors; only two of them having been killed; and but few of the British.

And shall my name, my blood defiled
Be, with a false, unnatural child?"

XXI.

Flashed through his soul such bitter thought
As now and then a gleam he caught
Of her illumined aspects glow,
And, as it heaved, her breast of snow;
So, quickly as the tale was done,
Abrupt he said: "The storm keeps on;
Its beating on this humble shed
Invites to slumber and to bed."
At once, and it was time in sooth,
Said their good-night the boy and youth;
And to their humbler cabin go,
The earth and ether fleeced with snow.
There couched on comfortable fur,
Bright, happy dreams their fancies stir,
In which the glowing rose-bud breathes
Amid the laurel's shining wreathes.

XXII.

The open smile on the daughter's face,
As she bade him good-night with a fond embrace,
Began the cloud from her sire to chase.
O who such a breast on his own hath felt
Nor found all its stinging icicles melt?
But as on his couch he musing lay,
Frequent across his mind would stray
What every realm's wild annals prove
Of the all-conquering power of love.

These tell how alike in its fire are lost
Youth's purity and age's frost;
What feeble guardians against its flame
Are honor, piety, and shame;
How in the days to creation nigh
It drew the angels from the sky;
How dark and deep the stain it flung
On the sweetest psalmist that ever sung;
And how to sin and folly blind
It made the wisest of mankind.

Then turning from the sacred page
To visions of the classic age,
The themes of tragedies and wars
Still glimmered beauty's falling stars—
Phædra, and Helen, and the wife
That took the great Atrides's life,
And she who left by Actium's shores
The world behind her flying oars.

Thus mused he 'till to dreams were wrought
His vague and vaguer growing thought,
And o'er him came the power that throws
His spell alike on joys and woes.

XXIII.

While these sad thoughts her sire oppressed,
Sought the fair cause her place of rest,
Unconscious that the world contained
A bosom she had ever pained.
On either side the cabin spread,
Its drooping wings, a rustic shed;
The one her parents' slumbers blessed.
The other was her lowly nest.

With well-furred skins, well dressed 'twas graced,
The soldier's gifts, the maiden's taste,
For tapestry and carpets placed;
And lit with blazing logs, a warm,
Bright spot it was, amid the storm.

By the small window which illumed
The fur-lined bower her roses bloomed;
And a flue built by her lover's care
From her own fire-place warmed them there.

Her fawn a snug and well-strawed shed
Had joining hers, and by her bed;
For the forest's child could ill endure
To sleep within a human door,
But took a wild and strange delight
To visit her mother's arms by night,
Though now from the dark and driving snow,
She snugly couched in her shelter low,
And the fur skreen was thin between
The damsels and the doe.

XXIV.

As cast the maid her glance about,
And thought of her little treasures without,
And the tender care, which against the storm
Had made the whole so snug and warm,
Her bosom glowed with purest love
To earth below and heaven above;
And ere her beauteous head she laid
Upon her couch, she knelt and prayed,
Knelt on the fur of that panther's hide,
By which she once had like to have died,

With all her soul to the dear faith given,
Which calls the Lord our Father in Heaven,
And teaches, He that light bestows,
Food to the chirping sparrow throws,
And He the morning star that gilds,
Arrays the lily of the fields,
And that His eye paternal sees
Mankind with more regard than these.

In all the peace such faith can spread
Through human breasts, she sought her bed;
And as she drew the furs so warm
Over the beauty of her form,
Remembered the clothing God did give
To frail, beguiled, beguiling Eve,
And hugged to her bosom the sweet thought,
To her like robes like care had brought,
And happier thence her soft form hid
Beneath the panther coverlid.

XXV.

O strange! a thing so gentle and pure,
Should make a father's heart endure
A pang sufficient his soul to fill
With the darkest records of human ill!
Why should the maid of the fawn and flowers
Remind of the ruin of Ilium's towers?
Why those limbs in furs warm-furled,
Suggest the losing of the world?
'Tis that the form those furs infold,
Wears beauty's tint in beauty's mould,
And beauty, since on man's glad eyes
It beamed, God-wrought, in Paradise,

Hath been the source to make him feel
 His bitterest woe and sweetest weal;
 And those to whom it gives delight
 The deepest, deepest feels its blight.

Aye, he who the smile soft-beaming down
 On his soul hath felt, hath felt the frown
 Too often to night his sweet day cast,
 And every star put out, at last;
 'Till beauty's chronicle best read,
 He deemed in the Medusa's head,
 Which shone with face divinely fair,
 But curling serpents wreathed for hair.

XXVI.

O ye, who with such dream as this
 Imbitter the sweetest source of bliss,
 Would ye had seen, to drive it away,
 That lovely maid as she sleeping lay!

She smiles in her dream; and what is the charm
 That on the swart coverlid presses her arm?
 From pure white hand to shadowy hair
 Gaze on the marvel of beauty there,
 And confess unsullied 'tis sent from Heaven,
 As the virgin snow from the cloud is given,
 And confess with tint as pure it glows,
 As through her veil of dew the rose,
 And that the moon just born again
 Shines not with light so free from stain.

XXVII.

Yes! pure she comes from her heavenly birth,
 Sweet beauty, too oft, to be soiled on earth!

And the serpents Medusa's head that crowned,
Are types of the reptiles that gird her round—
The gliding, fawning, varnished things,
With nimble tongues and poisoned stings—
And not of venom'd pangs, she darts
In fond, confiding, feeling hearts.

'Tis a symbol drawn from creation's dawn,
When fruit from the tree of knowledge torn
By the fell serpent to Eve was born ;
And those who tempt her daughters take
Their lessons from that glozing snake.

THE MAID OF THE DOE.

CANTO FOUR.

THE MAID OF THE DOE.

CANTO FOUR.

THE BATTLE.

I.

O go and stray by a mountain stream,
When day is dawning with rosy beam,
Where linger the forest-cherry's flowers,
And fresh is the bloom of the wild-grape bowers,
And where on quivering spray and wing
A thousand birds in transport sing,
While the sparkling stream, as it leaps along,
Harmonious pours its flood of song,
And see a type of that sweeter morn
Of life that comes when love is born !

II.

Then light and sweetness and music fill
The soul, but whence they glow and thrill,

We heed no more than the hidden sun,
 Or the colorless bloom the vines upon,
 Or of all the birds a single one,
 Or which of the ripples along the stream
 Hath the clearest note or the brightest beam ;
 But careless enjoy without control
 The delicious tumult of the soul,
 Scarce conscious of the subtle power
 To which we owe the balmy hour.

III.

But changes soon the orb of day
 His gladdening for his scorching ray ;
 And bitter the fruit of all that bloom,
 Which timidly shed such sweet perfume ;
 And drooped and silent the moulting bird,
 Whose love-born song was so rapturous heard ;
 And wasted by the dog-day's beam,
 Joyless and voiceless creeps the stream.

IV.

And fevered, imbibited and withering,
 Droops oft the bosom when love is king ;
 And heavy now his sceptre's weight
 Is laid on hearts so blessed of late,
 They deemed a forest tricked with ice,
 A glittering bower of Paradise.
 The father's jealous care his child
 No more permitted to roam the wild ;
 The slippery paths, the drifted snow,
 Were reasons why she should not go ;

When these had vanished 'twas his whim
That she should ever walk with him;
And colder and colder welcome given
To Laurens every morn and even,
Drove him, at length almost away
From the lovely source of his bosom's day.

V.

As more and more their severance grows,
Its fate each bosom more deplores,
And on their love-looks to encroach
Began a shadow of reproach.

"Why thus from me yourself divide?"
"Ah! why so seldom seek my side?"
Are questions whispered in their sighs,
Or written in their gazing eyes.
In these heart-mirrors neither reads
The fondness, but the shade it breeds,
And thus in either, day by day,
The shadow more obscures the ray,
And less and less their smiles illume
Each other's bosom's thickening gloom.

VI.

At length arrived with the parting hour,
The full flood tide of passion's power;
Then measured adieu to the sire he spoke,
But affectionate words to the mother out broke.
And when to the daughter to say good-by,
He turned, and saw in her moistened eye
A look of love and agony,

Sunk his elation, reserve fled—
 “O heaven and earth and thou,” he said,
 “Loveliest and best of mortal birth,
 Dearer to me than heaven and earth !
 And ye, her being’s honored source,
 And guardians of its beauteous course,
 Witness the vow I solemn breathe,
 If through this awful war I live,
 As soon as peace again bestows
 The name of friends on generous foes,
 Myself and fortunes shall be laid
 Down at thy feet, adored maid;
 And if through wars vicissitude
 I can to thee or thine do good,
 Which duty shall not disapprove,
 ’Twill be indeed a labor of love;
 And I beg as the boon of this parting hour
 You’ll not deny it to my power;
 Soothe thus the bosom rent in twain
 To leave thee, though to meet again !”

VII.

He said, and to kiss her fair hand bowed,
 When o’er her senses swept a cloud ;
 Like a rose with incumbering rain-drops bent
 Her tear-gemmed cheek on his shoulder leant,
 And turned as pale as the vaporish moon,
 In the dim shadow of her swoon.

VIII.

All to her sire was such surprise,
 At first, he scarce believed his eyes ;

Next anger, and then scorn prevail,
And charge by turns his brow with pale
But when his child's suspended breath
Gave him a glimpse of her in death,
Parental feeling's potent charm
Buried the others in alarm.

He followed her by her lover borne
To her couch, and helped to lay her down,
And absorbed with him in watching there
The result of the mother's ministering care,
Knew naught on earth to wish, to prize,
Except to see unclosed her eyes.

IX.

Nor long before with languid ray,
Opened those sources of sweeter day
To the soul of man, than the sun's birth
Shed on the scarcely moulded earth.
They looked around, and surprise absorbs
At first the radiance of the orbs,
But soon a gentle shade of shame
O'er the soul-shadowing mirrors came,
With beams of fondness melting through,
As she waved her hand and sighed adieu!

X.

“Yes, go!” the mother said, “’twere wrong
This scene of torture to prolong.”
And the speechless youth, whose last look said
More than could language, turned his head,
And dashed the tear-drop from his eye,
And hastened from their roof to fly.

Though fast the soldier strode before,
Close followed the sire beyond his door;
“I claim a parting word!” he cried.
The accent waked the soldier’s pride,
And he turned around with loftier brow:
“I listened to your recent vow,
And beg you’ll hear my answer now;
If my child’s life you saved from harm,
You, too, have robbed it of its charm—
Its charm to me at least, therefore
We are somewhat even on that score.

“As to the offer of your hand,
The doe and wolf shall sooner band,
Than her’s take wedlock’s holy ring
From any rebel ’gainst her king.

“As to the proffered aid you would
Lend us through war’s vicissitude,
We shall not need it, sir. Behold
Yon signal smoke in volumes rolled
From many beacon fires! First
Up the horizon’s verge it burst
'Way yonder, where the azure plain
Spreads to your vision like the main;
The hills the signal onward brought,
Thence by the mountain tops 'twas caught;
And see how fast my beacon fire
Sends up its high responsive spire!
The pillars of cloud as they swept along
Proclaimed Cornwallis’s army strong,
With Leslie’s force; and that every hand
Which would of rebellion purge the land,

Must seek the appointed rendezvous;
I, therefore, bid you a short adieu!
On yonder plain again we meet,
Unless your horses prove too fleet."

This said, he bowed with stately port.
The youth replied: "I'll not retort,
But thank you that you showed the signs
Of tempest in yon cloudy lines,
Gathering to burst in blood and woe
Upon my country. Strength to go
It gives me; and away I speed
To help her at her utmost need."

XI.

Thus saying, down the usual road
Which from the cabins led, he strode;
But at a hunter's path which wound
Off towards the west, the page he found
Awaiting him. With hurried pace
They sped along that rugged trace,
Waded the streams, save sometimes where
The ice was strong enough to bear,
Threaded the dells and climbed the hills,
Wound by the rocks and leaped the rills.

But as each lofty point they passed,
A look reverted Laurens cast,
To see once more aloft and bare
The cabined islet of the air;
But on his moistening eye then broke
The signal pillar of volumed smoke;
And that would string his limbs again
To push along with might and main.

Nor 'mid the cares his soul engage,
Was he unmindful of the page,
But bore him through the deepest floods,
And helped him up the steepest woods.

Thus toiling on, night found them at
The waters of the Ararat,
With the great mountain ranges thrown
Between them and the frozen zone.

In a milder clime by the crystal stream,
They kindled their fire's cheerful beam,
Heaped high the dry leaves for their bed,
A canopy of pine boughs spread,
Took at their ease their slight repast,
And into slumber fell at last.

XII.

Meanwhile, upon the usual route,
Which from their wild retreat led out,
Ruthlyn and one base follower lay
In ambush for them half the day—
Ruthlyn, the second in command
Of the wilderness-hidden tory band—
Fonder to prowl for prey at night,
Than meet his foes in open fight,
His quick eye's dark sinistrous roll
Revealed his black, perverted soul.

'Twas he contrived the ambuscade,
Which erst a captive Laurens made,
Nor was 't without imbittering strife,
That Hamilton preserved his life,
And from the stain of robbery
Saved the provincial chivalry.

The caitiff, too, aspired to bend
Flora to be his more than friend,
And thence to Laurens felt of late
What jealousy could add to hate.

To make his fell accomplice bold
In the dark deed, he promised gold,
Of which, he said, a precious store
Laurens about his person bore,
Just gathered from his large estates
For revel with his martial mates.

Hence for their victims eager laid
Both, half the day, in ambuscade ;
When, deeming their depart postponed,
Chagrined towards their homes returned,
And Ruthlyn in its cause to search,
Sought the high groves of Eagle-perch.

XIII.

A darker shade on his brow was thrown
When there he learned the birds had flown.
“Gone!” he exclaimed, “and pray, which way?
I have not seen them pass to day,
Though all the morning on the road
Which should have led them through the wood.”

XIV.

“Were you indeed?” the maid rejoined,
“They heard of something of the kind.
Garnoch was with you, was he not?
Carlos a hint from some one got,
That you and Garnock were to lay
In ambush for some game to day.”

As spoke the maid with searching look,
 With rage and shame alternate shook
 Dark Ruthlyn's breast. Her sire observed
 How from their wondering gaze he swerved,
 And, struck with horror, said, "My dear,
 How this wild story could you hear?"

"From Carlos, father; but I thought
 It was an idle fancy wrought
 In the boy's brain, by some light word
 Of gossip from our people heard.
 Yet, I confess, I feared the worst,
 As more and more reflection nursed
 The dark idea; and from it came
 Much that this morning shook my frame."
 "Ruthlyn, these hints you dont deny;
 And, sir, I must be plain—your eye
 Confirms them; can my loyal band
 Be foul with an assassin's hand?"

XV.

By this time on the dastard's face
 Took impudence confusion's place,
 "And by what right, sir," he exclaimed.
 "Have your suspicions thus defamed
 My character, and tongue abused
 My patience by the words you used?
 I never bowed me to the rule,
 I own, of your romantic school,
 But do as wisdom shows we must
 To bring rebellion to the dust;
 Nor spare from folly, falsely named
 Honor, those who this realm inflamed;

Nor deem, sir, stretches your command
To wound my heart or rule my hand."

With this, abrupt he left their door
Accumulating vengeance's store
In his dark breast, another way
To fall on them another day,
And glut his soul with sweeter prey.

XVI.

Although his presence the parents grieved,
And much his absence their child relieved,
The feeling which his outbreak left
Was that of being more bereft;
And drearer and drearer every day
Grew mountain lone and forest grey.

XVII.

Meantime, their captive, lately freed,
Bestrode again a warrior steed.
He chanced to meet a mountain band,
Summoned down by Greene's command
To strengthen Morgan, ranging yet
The borders of the Pacolet.
With them he hurried on, as sure
Service to find if not his corps,
For ever nearest to the foe.
It was the Legion's part to go.

XVIII.

Warmly did Morgan meet the youth,
And kindly heard his tale of truth;

“ Well, well! I’m glad to have you here,
 And that bright boy the camp will cheer.
 For as to seeking Colonel Lee,
 With Marion somewhere on Pedee,
 ’Twould be as wise as looking for
 A needle in a stack of straw.

“ You in my staff shall have employ,
 And Washington will take the boy;
 They want just such a chap as he
 In the brave Colonel’s cavalry.
 Consent, there’s little time for talk;
 Tarlton is giving us sharp work.”

“ Yes, General, and with many thanks,”
 Laurens replied, and joined the ranks;
 And Carlos’s bugle merrily
 Rung to the tramp of cavalry.

XIX.

For the light corps was hard beset;
 Tarlton had passed the Pacolet,
 And the Earl himself with rapid stride
 Was marching up Catawba’s side,
 To throw his veterans between
 Morgan and the recruits of Greene.

And much it chafed the Brigadier
 To be by Tarlton pressed so near;
 He had been ever used in fight
 Safety to find, and not in flight;
 And at each step more sullen grown,
 He sat him at the Cowpens down,
 Resolved that his presumptuous foe
 Should feel the prowess of his blow.

XX.

His troops refreshed, the following day
He placed in battle's best array.

Ranged beneath Pickens's famed ensign,
In front was the militia line,
Many with rifles armed; and near,
Their horses fastened in the rear.

Next this, at proper distance, stands
Another, formed of veterans,
Part of the heroes who sustained
Their army's honor when 'twas stained
In Camden's fatal field; these are
Of Maryland and Delaware,
Whose broken regiments compose
One, still the terror of its foes.

In place and valor joined with these
Were two militia companies;
Familiar with the bayonet,
And led by Tate and Triplett,
Who from Virginia's borders came
In search of other fields of fame.

But covered most with glory scars
Were Kirkwood and his Delawares;*
Remnant of those their land, that lay
Exposed and bleeding by her bay,
Yet from her generous bosom yields
The common cause in distant fields.
As battle made their numbers few,
The circle of their glory grew;

* See Note C; and 1 Lee's Memoirs, 182, 83, in note.

For every comrade death struck down
Left them a treasure of renown,
Till round a company's brows were bent
The chaplets of a regiment;
And foremost in those honors stood
The unrewarded, brave Kirkwood.

XXI.

Upon this second line the best.
Nay, only hopes of victory rest;
And on its brave commander more
Than even his intrepid corps.
From Maryland, whose waters pour
Their treasures on her double shore,
Derived his birth this son of fame—
John Edgar Howard was his name.
Careless of stratagem, he strode
To victory by the nearest road;
To valor trusting more than art,
He struck at the invader's heart,
And loved by deeds, not words, to show
The way to triumph o'er the foe.
Calmest when most the battle stormed,
Quickly the broken rank be formed,
Manœuvred steadily to get
The contest to the bayonet,
And make the end at once to be
Illustrious death or victory.

XXII.

As the reserve, to shelter all,
Or on the vanquished foe to fall,

The cavalry were aptly placed,
By Washington's commandment graced.
Like his great kinsman, William too
From the Potomac's border drew
His birth, and ranks with the great sons
Of the great river of the swans;
(From Patowomek, the Indian name
For river of swans, Potomac came;)
And none than he of all the rest
Had a kinder heart or bolder breast.

Of stalwart arm and statue large,
He loved the battle's hottest charge;
Not driven by anger, but the glow
Of chivalry the valiant know,
He felt a kindness for the foes
Who gave him scope for noble blows.

Happy to woo fair honor's charms,
Beneath him were the men-at-arms,
And for the charge impatient stand
Around him now his gallant band.

XXIII.

And last, in front of all his host
Did Morgan rifle parties post,
To feel the enemy as he came,
And kindle up the battle's flame,
To tumble in their tracks a horse
Or two, and break their onset's force.

O then his bosom's wish was strong
For his old corps and Gabriel Long.*

* Gabriel Long was Morgan's favorite captain in his old rifle regiment.

But turning from regrets his breast,
First the militia he addressed.
"My gallant friends," he said, "who come
To fight for country and for home,
I will not worthy lives expose
Too much to your unworthy foes.
I know your courage—I have tried
Militia, fighting by their side
Too often not to know the zeal
They ever for their country feel.
But all my present need requires
Is that you pour in two close fires.
Take care you dont too soon let go,
And take care, too, to fire low.

"But of their bullets have no dreads
They are sure to pass above your heads.
I've known those fellows long before
To day, and beat them with my corps—
Just my old rifle corps, without
Those bayonets and horsemen stout,
Whose prickly points and sabres' edge
Shall shield you with an iron hedge.
Then nothing fear; but when you fire
Behind the regulars retire."

XXIV.

Then to the veterans he turned,
And a few words where courage burned
And confidence, he calmly spoke;
And told them when the first line broke
Not to regard it, for his plan
Comprised the flying of his van.

In silence then and martial glow,
He sternly waited for the foe.

XXV.

And quick and with presumptuous joy
Did Tarlton's eager troops deploy.
Two light field-pieces' brazen shine
Add to the terrors of his line.
With these two regiments in rank,
And fierce dragoons to shield each flank,
Moved ardent on; and in the rear
McArthur's bold battalion near,
Supported, too, by bands of horse,
Formed the reserve of all his force.

XXVI.

The fiery leader scarce delayed
To see his battle line arrayed,
Before he made, in swift advance,
The files to tramp, the steeds to prance.

Then battle's sharp prelusive notes
Were wakened from the rifle-throats,
And soon its grander fires illumed,
And terrors from the cannon boomed.

Fast backward borne to Pickens's ranks,
Ranged the light parties on the flanks,
And soon with these (their double fire
Poured in) to the next line retire,
With Pickens some, while others flee
Before the dreaded cavalry.

XXVII.

Thus of its novices the front
Of battle cleared, was poured its brunt
Upon the steady veteran line,
Where Howard's ready bayonets shine,
Where, slaughter's waifs and honor's heirs,
Stood Kirkwood and his Delawares,
Where Pickens's bravest took their stand,
And Morgan's self was in command.

XXVIII.

On the impetuous Britons rush !
But firmly met their shock
The patriots, as the billows gush
A precipice of rock.
Impatient that they will not swerve
Up Tarlton orders his reserve,
And stretches out so far his rank,
As to endanger Howard's flank,
Which quickly in the open field
To face the cavalry was wheeled ;
When Morgan, to relieve his line,
Bade it in calm retreat incline
Towards Washington, who thus a wing
Of sabres on its flank would fling.

XXIX.

Prompt and precise the veterans made
The ordered movement retrograde ;
But prelude to defeat and rout
The Britons deemed it, and with shout

And tumult rushed upon their foe.
The bayonets are leveled low
Already, and aloft in air
Glitter the sabres, keen and bare,
To crush them at a blow.

But Howard's calm courageous eye
Was watching while they hurried nigh,
And saw with joy old Kirkwood's glares
As they pressed on his Delawares.

"Now wheel and fire!" he said ;
And suddenly a storm of death
Burst in a blast of sulphurous breath
Upon their battle's head.

By the tremendous blow their line
Astonished, crippled or supine,
Showed like a panther when a ball
Has turned his spring into a fall
And writhing limb nor glaring eye
Reveal if he shall fight or die.

So stunned, curled up and robbed of strength,
Seemed that fierce line through all its length ;
And in confusion while it reeled,
The bayonets pinned it to the field.
So swift the tide of battle changed
A single cannon scarce they ranged

The charging host to stun,
When Anderson before the whole
Used espontoon for springing pole,
And leaped upon their gun ;
And ere the explosive power could catch
Its vigor from the burning match,

Backward its bearer bore,
 Who struggled with the patriot train
 To launch upon their crowded plain
 His thunderbolts once more,
 Till Howard's self could scarcely save
 From his own men that foeman brave.*

XXX.

Just as stern Howard wheeled to fight,
 To Washington a piteous sight
 The flying riflemen afford,
 Struck fiercely by the British sword.
 At some the flashing sabre speeds
 Dodging its blows beneath their steeds,
 And some he views ignobly die,
 Their steeds too far, the foe too nigh.

“Boys, do you see that?” As he spoke,
 The ashes from his pipe he shook,
 And thrust it down his boot;
 As sure a prelude of a charge,
 As of a song by river marge,
 The music of a lute.

“Boys! see you that?” again he said,
 And waved aloft his ample blade,
 And Carlos's bugle rung.

Then like a line of arrows sent
 From Indian bows when fiercest bent,
 Away, away they sprung!
 A moment scarce their frantic course
 Was checked by Tarlton's shattered horse,

[* See Note D.]

Who, bent in flight, endure
The slaughter which their trenchant blades
In many routs and many raids
Did perpetrate before.
When first upon their foes were dashed
The victor swords, as lightning flashed
The blows that struck them down;
But raised again, in smoking flood
Streamed from the blades a shower of blood,
Their enemies to drown.
And still the drops of horror fall
Till half the foe remain
Captive, with arms, artillery, all,
Or stretched upon the plain.

XXXI.

But round their chief in gallant group,
His mounted officers a troop
And staff to guard and aid him form,
And save the wreck of battle's storm;
For never yet hath panic fear,
Nor the dark hour of despair
Chilled in their hearts that noble glow
The gentlemen of England know,
Which makes them follow duty's call,
And honor's, though the sky may fall.

Now on their sad but sacred care,
They hung with Tarlton in the rear
Of those who first from battle fled,
Or in its midst had ne'er been led,

Ranging their cavalry to place
A barrier to the bloody chase,
And save the groups of stragglers
Scattered before their conquerors,
When near they heard a thundering sound,
And seemed to shake the solid ground ;
When turning suddenly around,
Before his squadron far
They saw a single horseman strain,
And o'er his charger's flickering mane,
His sabre through its lurid stain
Gleam like a blazing star.
" 'Tis he, the battle's boldest son !
My arm at least one Washington
Shall feel !" cried Tarlton, and rushed on
To meet his rushing foe ;
And dreadful was the charger's shock,
And fearful was the champions' lock,
And showed the fire their sabres struck
The fury of each blow.
Then Tarlton soon had lowly laid,
But instant rushing to his aid,
His comrades intercept the blade
Upon its fatal plunge ;
And theirs against the victor bent,
And him to death had quickly sent,
But one uplifted arm was rent
By Perry's eager lunge ;
And Carlos lucky pistol drew
From t'other one the purple hue,
And down the listed sabre threw,

And rescued from the strife
Him whom his soldiers claimed to be
The mirror true of chivalry,
And dear had deemed their victory
If purchased with his life.
And Tarlton and his gallant group.
What could they but with rapid stoop
Fly where were now in rallied troop
The fragments of their fight;
And thence, subdued in all but mind,
And sad for those they leave behind,
And sad for those they go to find,
Press on their painful flight?
Perchance to envy as they fled
Their comrades on their gory bed!

XXXII.

Nor did the victors of the field
To rest that evening's remnant yield,
But conquerors, captives, trophies, all
Were o'er Broad River by nightfall,
Leaving their glory harvest plain
To silence and the buried slain.

THE MAID OF THE DOE.

CANTO FIFTH.

THE MAID OF THE DOE.

CANTO FIFTH.

THE RETREAT.

I.

Ye whose high task it is to trace
The laws which hold the wondrous frame
Of the vast universe in place,
And make revolving years the same ;

Who in unchanging laws behold
The Changeless, and by infiniteness
Of wisdom all things shaped of mould
Perfect, and of eternal fitness ;

Yet blame not those who deem they see
In special acts the hand divine,
And through their clouds of misery
Believe particular mercies shine.

For ever since the world begun,
 The heart of man its faith hath given
 To words and signs, the Eternal One
 Hath spoke, and shown to earth from heaven.

Then what the difference if the mind
 He fashioned to receive a sense
 Of special goodness in the kind
 Workings of general Providence;

 Or bows his universal laws
 Sometimes to a particular end?
 Either alike the wretched draws
 To God as their almighty friend.

And one or t'other 'tis, or both,
 Teaching alike to low and high,
 Through every age and clime, the truth
 Of earth's connection with the sky.

II.

Thus, too, a scene or cause endeared,
 And sanctified to man is oft,
 In which the aid divine appeared,
 Or signs propitious gleamed aloft.
 And Yadkin's and Catawba's streams
 Seemed to reflect such sacred gleams,
 When Earl Cornwallis pressed the band
 Of Morgan with his hero hand.

III.

For when the steeds with heavy tramp
 Brought the sad tidings to his camp,

That more than half of Tarlton's host
Was at the field of Cowpens lost,
A multitude of whom the train
Of Morgan swelled in captive chain,
Surprise and grief his bosom tossed ;
And to retrieve what others lost
With his own arm, or all involve
In the same wreck, was his resolve.

IV.

For not to wage ignoble war
Did Earl Cornwallis come so far
From his high home and beauteous wife,
Jemima, left to weep her life
Away for her brave Lord's return.
No ! high his hopes of glory burn !

Already lord of Julius Towers,*
And loved at Windsor's royal bowers,
He burned from the new world to bring
The trophy dearest to his king—
Submission from the daring crew
Who strove to rend his realm in two,
And clouded with rebellion's frown
The brightest jewel of his crown.

V.

And this his task went bravely on—
Two armies crushed, two Colonies won,

* Cornwallis was at the time Lord Lieutenant of the Tower of London.

“ Ye Towers of Julius, England's lasting shame.”

What is said in the text of the excessive grief of his wife at his absence is not exaggerated, at least from the account of it which has reached me.

A third half ready for his sway,
Virginia next should be his prey ;—
Virginia, whence rebellion came
First, and which mainly fed its flame,
And yet erect in lofty pride
Stood powerful and unterrified.
Strike her but down, and England's throne
Would soon its old dominions own,
At least to the Potomac zone.
Nor long without its South ally
Could Independence banner fly
Triumphant in the Northern sky ;
And all the South appeared to lean
Entirely on the arms of Greene.
Destroy his mustering bands, and whence
Again could flow the South's defence ?

One army was with Charleston ta'en,
At Camden one dispersed and slain.
Its fragments and what else the land
Could raise, composed now Greene's command ;
Its total wreck despair must bring,
And then submission to the king.

VI.

Amid this reasoning of the Earl's,
Flashed of the conquerors of worlds
Examples high on his high soul,
And chief of him who won the goal
Of glory in this new found realm,
Cortez, who made the flames o'erwhelm
His ships, and all that means affords
Of safety, save victorious swords.

Fired with the thought, and wholly bent
On crushing the impediment
Sole, as he deemed, the South to bring
In full submission to his king,
He led the way to yield to flames
All that the soldier's comfort claims,
Celerity to give his bands
And make them seek in conquered lands,
Through lofty deeds and noble toil,
More than they made of flame the spoil.
Then ardent up Catawba's banks
He led in eager march his ranks,
To cut off Morgan from the roads
By which he hastened to its fords;
For to those fords the Brigadier
Was scarce as Earl Cornwallis near.

VII.

Eager the struggle was of each
Those points of vantage first to reach;
The one pushed on to save his fame,
Captives and spoils—the other came
To rescue and revenge on flame;
And Morgan hardly crossed the stream
When in the lurid twilight gleam,
The hostile banners on the shore
From which his corps had struggled o'er;
And Tarlton's troopers draw their swords
To rush into the angry fords.

But darkness and the brimming tide
Made the serener Earl abide
That night upon the safer side.

Yet less his troops of slumber thought
 Than of the conquest to be wrought
 At morning on their foes;
 And dreams of comrades they should meet,
 And of revenge for late defeat,
 Enlivened their repose.

VIII.

Gladly the dawning day they see,
 And gladly hear the reveille;
 But mingled with the drums,
 A sound as of a distant storm,
 Or ocean billows dashed to foam,
 Or torrents from their mountain home,
 Up from Catawba comes.
 And in wild current deep and strong
 His angry waters rushed along,
 Their banks o'erfoaming wide;
 And sudden cross Cornwallis path
 Stretched out a mighty arm of wrath,
 And checked him in his pride.

IX.

Two days the full and foaming flood
 Against the Earl the pass made good;
 But with the third day's beam
 The chafing Lord the chafing wave
 Subsided deemed enough to brave,
 And plunged into the stream.

X.

But Greene, with escort light, to meet
 Morgan meanwhile on coursers fleet,

Had hurried to that river's side;
And while the flood was in its pride,
Prisoners and spoils had sent away,
And all that might his march delay,
And spread his light troops on the banks
To check and thin the invading ranks.

XI.

And bravely by the aidant flood
Against the Earl the natives stood;
And clamors from Catawba gushed
As foemen on his bosom rushed.

As struggling Leslie's steeds to drown,
The angry current swept them down,
Tumbled O'Hara's charger o'er,
And scarcely staggered to the shore
Beneath the Earl himself his steed
The distant rifles doomed to bleed;
And many men, their nobler prey,
The exultant river bore away.
But the main army struggled o'er,
And drove its guardians from their shore;
When Davidson, to rise no more,
Fell; and fell too his country's tear
At the early death of the Brigadier.
Mounting his steed to save his force
From the swift charge of Tarlton's horse,
Through his brave breast the ball was sped
That mixed him with the glorious dead.

Their leader slain, his soldiers fly,
Or by the trenchant sabre die.

XII.

Now to the Yadkin's banks the race
Is hotly urged, and urged the chase ;
And winter rains the winter roads
Deepened, and deepened more the fords.
But miry way nor tempest rude
Can check pursuers or pursued ;
Onward they plunge, in drenching rain,
Through swollen stream and splashy plain,
Till on the second dismal night
Dark gleamed the Yadkin on their sight.

XIII.

Through darkness and the chilling rain
Greene's infantry a passage gain
In boats, canoes and every rude
Contrivance to surmount the flood ;
And ford the cavalry the stream
By their pine torches' flickering gleam.
And scarcely had they gained the shore
When down in torrents seemed to pour
The very clouds, and rills around
In torrents to the Yadkin bound ;
And while O'Hara pressed so near,
He even touched the lagging rear,
And his exultant cavalry strains
Beyond the captured baggage wains,
The river bursting from his banks
Bore back from his roused breast their ranks—
Rose the great guardian of the soil,
And thundered forth, “ Vain man, recoil ! ”

XIV.

Thus, twice the favor of Heaven confest
Sent through each conscious patriot breast,
A thrill of fervent gratitude
To the great fountain of all good.
In Him they feel their trust abide
Whose promise they see verified,
That race nor battle should belong
Forever to the swift and strong.
Thus cheered amid their toil they go,
And to the river leave the foe.*

XV.

With sad but with submissive eyes
Saw the great Earl the ready prize
Snatched from his grasp again. His plan
Was next upon the lower Dan,
To force the driven bands to troop,
And there to crush them at a swoop.
For there in volume deep and strong
He knew the river rolled along;
And where were boats to waft them o'er
Ere he could strike them on its shore?
This quick resolved, upon the roads
Which lead to Yadkin's upper fords,

* See Lee's Memoirs, 1 vol., 272. And I had as well say here, that the account given in the text of this celebrated retreat, is taken implicitly, others may say servilely, from that work. But I shall be happy, if in altering the form, I have preserved the spirit of its picturesque and animated narrative.

He pushed along, and got between
The mountain refuges and Greene,
Glad that his army thus should be
Hemmed in by rivers and the sea.

XVI.

And deep the care that banished rest
From his, the flying hero's breast;
The safety of the South he too
Dependent on his army knew,
And the great chief of all the brave
Had chosen him that South to save.
For oft Rhode Island's mighty son
Had counsels shared with Washington;
From him had learned in battle-field
How to subdue, and how to yield;
With him had shared through cold and heat
The eager chase, the sad retreat;
And still to Greene of all his host
Freedom's great champion trusted most.
That lofty trust to vindicate
Now all his counsels meditate.

He knows that soon his flying bands
Will meet where Guilford Court House stands
The army in chief with brave Huger,
And Legion Partisan of Lee.

But sure defeat when all unite
Would wait them if the Earl they fight,
And the sole struggle of the brave
Must be the mustering force to save,

Until recruits Virginia yield
Enough to let it keep the field.

XVII.

While plans for this engage his care
They drew to Guilford Court House near,
And all delightedly survey
To greet them placed in fair array
The army in chief, and in its van
Glittering the Legion Partisan.

But Laurens and Carlos chief behold
With joy the well-known green and gold,
And see the eagle pennon wave
In fair effulgence o'er the brave ;
And even livelier joy it breeds
To recognise the noble steeds,
That to the charge their riders bear
Like flashing thunderbolts of war,
Or, saving victory's precious fruit,
Deride escape or mock pursuit.

XVIII.

Behind their tossing manes elate
Of heart and brow their riders sate,
Bronzed o'er by toil and decked with scars,
And gemmed with battle's glittering stars.
Among them Rudolph, Armstrong shone,
Manning, O'Neale, and Eggleston,
Heard, Irwin, Carnes, and Carrington,
Middleton, Lewis, and Harrison.

Nor were the Legion infantry
Less than their comrade cavalry

Known to renown or service high;
 But chosen by their leader's eye,
 And the command of Washington,
 From this whole army, every one
 Some noble deed had shared or done;
 And Michael Rudolph of their ranks
 Won of their Colonel's love and thanks
 And confidence, as much or more
 Than any who adorned his corps.

XIX.

But towering over all his band
 In fame and merit as command,
 With beaming brow and martial air
 Sat their young leader on his mare—
 His dark brown mare of presence high,
 And nostril spread, and glancing eye,
 And limbs with speed clothed as with wings,
 And neck with sabre-lightenings,
 That snuffed the battle from afar,
 And mid the trumpets said, Ha! Ha! *
 And furnished in perfection high,
 A setting for the army's eye.†

XX.

His form so slight, such rounded limbs.
 His hand so soft and small,
 He seemed more formed for ladies' whims,
 Than for the battle's brawl;

* He saith among the trumpets, Ha! Ha! and smelleth the battle afar off.—*Job, 39: 25.*

† So General Greene called Colonel Lee.

But in his linements they trace
His lineage from that Norman race
 He emulates in fame,
And say, so thick and early bloom
His laurels, from his mother's womb
 That he a soldier came.*

XXI.

River of swans, thy glorious wave
Its brightness to his birth-place gave—
From thy south shore, great stream of swans,
Came the great Lees and Washingtons;†
Thy border of the eagle wreath‡
Gave to them all their natal breath,
And seems with eagles and with swans
To typify its mighty sons.
For theirs was the bosom's downy store,
And theirs the genius aloft to soar;
And the eagle's pinion, and soft and bright
Breast of the swan their types unite
To symbolize this one aright,
Whose visage sparkled now with joy,
Laurens to see and his minstrel boy.

XXII.

But little time had those to greet
Whose safety rested in retreat.

* Mr. Randolph, in one of those rambling speeches he used to make in the Senate, attributed this remark to General Washington. I think I saw it in General Charles Lee's letters.

† The Revolutionary Governor Lee, of Maryland, was of the same family. See note E.

‡ I have seen as many as seven eagles on one tree near the spot where General Washington was born.

Soon was in motion put the van
 Upon the route to the lower Dan,
 By Carrington's advice, for he
 Could gather along its course
 Boats to transport the infantry,
 And men and arms of the cavalry,
 And well could swim the horse.

XXIII.

Greene, too, to check the Earl's career,
 And save from Tarlton pressing near,
 His straggling wings or lagging rear,
 Formed of the flower of his force,
 An active corps of foot and horse.
 Howard, and Washington, and Lee,
 Shone in its sparkling galaxy
 Of heroes; and the noble band
 Was pressed on Morgan's high command.

But worn with toil, and racked with pains
 Contracted on Canadian plains,
 Forced to disease at length to yield,
 With laurelled brow he left the field,
 And turned his tired step once more
 To the bright vale of Shenandoah.

XXIV.

With grief the army saw him go;
 And Greene determined to bestow
 Of the light corps the chief command
 On Otho Williams, of Maryland.

Soldiers and comrades, heart and voice,
 Confirmed the General's happy choice;

For nature gave and art improved
The talisman which made him loved ;
A beauteous form and manners kind,
Benevolence and noble mind,
And yet in lovely soul and face
Descends its magic to his race.

XXV.

At the first beat of the first drum
From that fair region did he come,
Where mountain streams in joyous league
Roll through the vale of Conecocheague ;
Sweet pastoral realm, he left its hills
Of plenty and peace for war's drear ills ;
And scarcely yet to manhood grown
Took the long march to Boston town,
Where his first share in strife he bore,
Lieutenant in a rifle corps.

By merit quickly raised, he saw
Every vicissitude of war—
Success, captivity, defeat ;
And wounds 'twas once his fate to meet.
But partial fortune could not bear
Again to mar a form so fair,
And bore him even through the storm
And wreck at Camden free from harm,
Though first that battle's fire he sought,
And shining through disaster fought.
Now tricked for war he shines once more,
The leader of the brave light corps.

XXVI.

His duty now to hang between
 Cornwallis and the army of Greene,
 And every toil and danger brave
 That to impede and this to save,
 Close to the foe at once he drew,
 And cross their front his cohort threw.

XXVII.

The imposing show of foot and horse
 Brought to a pause the hostile force,
 Which in loose rank was stretched along,
 As when at even-tide,
 In wavering line, and clamorous song
 The swans in ether glide.
 So these along the plain were strung
 As best might serve their haste ;
 For the sole thought their quarry brought
 Was how he nimbly raced !
 But now a gallant chief they see
 A bold battalion wield,
 Against his daring enemy
 At once a sword and shield ;
 And quickly thence in self defence,
 The Earl must make his line condense,
 And move more circumspect before
 The ready arms of such a corps.

XXVIII.

By day the Legion Partisan
 Hovered in sight of O'Hara's van,

But the Light corps at evening's close,
To keep unbroken their short repose,
Took larger distance from their foes.
For widely set was their strong piquet;
 And in two nights and days,
Not one his head on its leafy bed,
 But once in slumber lays.
And half-way on from midnight to dawn
 As the cold watch-stars steal,
Those slumbers break, and the road they take
 To get their only meal.
But to sweet reward no task is hard,
 And light is the labor of love!
And close and large to shield their charge
 And baffle their foe they move;
As the noblest bird of the wild wood
To save from harm his little brood,
Runs with lame pace and drooping wing,
The danger on himself to bring;
And sounds his shrillest larum note,
Rears the black ruffle round his throat,
And practises each gallant wile
That nature taught him to beguile
Destroyers, and no peril shuns,
So he can save his darling ones—
Thus threatening, courting, giving blows,
Baffled the bold Light corps its foes,
And round its precious charge fond wings
Spread to protect its slumberings.

XXVIII.

Thus o'er the Carolinian plain
Stretch in three lines, the Dan to gain,

Two armies and the severing corps;
 The last, Cornwallis just before,
 And to his right—while lower down
 And more advanced, Greene hastens on.
 The Earl thus on the upper route
 Shuts from the fords the patriots out,
 And hopes the whole to sweep
 Away while yet the brimming tide
 Restrains them to the southern side
 Of the river broad and deep.
 And adding stratagem to force,
 He left his van to keep its course,
 And sudden and swift his columns bent
 Into the road where Williams went.

XXIX.

He, as his wont was, hoped to steal
 An hour for his soldiers' meal;
 And round their fires burning well,
 Inhaling from the coals the smell
 Of broiling viands, his soldiers stood,
 While near the horses eat their food;
 This the sole hour they may employ
 In sweet repast and social joy;
 And sweet indeed in martial life
 Are those brief moments snatched from strife!

XXX.

The winter morning wet and drear
 Made then their fire-lit scene more dear,
 And joke and jollity passed around,
 When, hark! they hear a galloping sound,

And see on a meagre poney strain
In russet brown a country swain.
That the foe was nigh his honest eye
Told clearly as his tongue;
And Armstrong, of course, with a plump of horse
At once to saddle sprung.
And from Carrington, who waited on
O'Hara, then they heard,
To let them know how strangely slow
He moved with the vanguard.

XXXI.

Then Colonel Lee how things might be
Was ordered to explore;
For what Williams's band was to Greene's command
Was Lee's to the Light corps.
He mounted the mare, he set so fair,
And to strengthen the bold Armstrong,
Who had but a group of his sorrel troop,
He took the rest along.
They galloped far and nothing saw;
But with some who can swiftest speed,
Must Armstrong ride with his rustic guide,
And the Earl's position read.
So they mounted him on a swift of limb,
And on his poney slow
To Williams back must their bugler pack,
And let him their progress know.

XXXII.

Forward the gallant Armstrong hied,
While through the wood by the road side.

Slowly retired Lee ;
 When fire-arms in sharp discharge,
 And clang of steeds in eager charge
 Announce the enemy.
 The Legion leader's falcon eye
 Saw Tarlton's troopers sweeping by
 At Armstrong's swifter group,
 And from his covert by the way
 Like that keen bird upon his prey,
 Darted in eager stoop.

XXXII.

But, ah ! he gains them not before
 His bugler to the ground they bore,
 And, even while he prostrate laid,
 Mangled with many a trenchant blade !
 What boots it him his murderer's stain,
 Sabred in turn and chased and ta'en ?

As death's cold night was gathering nigh,
 He saw his Colonel's flashing eye,
 And heard his voice denouncing death
 To those whose blows he fell beneath,
 E'en while he prayed with plaintive breath
 That they his youth would spare ;
 " For see, I am defenceless now,
 Nor even at my saddle-bow
 A single pistol wear ! "

XXXIII.

Towards their captured captain, Lee
 Was softened into clemency,
 By a tale of his own humanity

In the day of the Camden route;
But when he saw the bleeding youth,
And heard his piteous tale of truth
The mercy-lamp went out.

And turning on the man an eye

In which was written "thou must die;"
He sternly said, "Here your life ends—
Write your last wishes to your friends."

XXXIV.

The proffered leaf and pencil took
The soldier, with a soldier's look;
And as his doomer saw him write,
He thought of the tender ties that might
That beating bosom blend the while
With others on his distant isle,
And gladly heard upon his rear
Videttes announce Cornwallis near;
For Miller was saved and all attained
Of good his slaughter could have gained;
Since cruel never, however keen,
Were those sabres again to the troops of Greene.

XXXV.

But sorrowful the victors laid
The expired boy* in the forest shade,
The pressing foe no time affords
A grave to dig him with their swords;

* His name was Gillies; and he was buried by Mr. Bruce, the hospitable farmer whose house he had just left. See a very interesting anecdote connected with this melancholy affair in Major Garden's second series, page 117.

And more they mourned their bugler dead
Than triumphed in the captives made.

XXXVI.

But Earl Cornwallis pressed along,
And Williams moved in order strong;
The chafing Legion closing all,
And watching every chance to fall
On their pursuers, seemed with eye
Reverted oft, but half to fly.

XXXVII.

Leaving this glittering veil before
The enemy's eyes with the rest of his corps,
Williams pushed on and gained the road
In which Greene's wearied army trod,
Hoping to get so far from foes
As to give his troops one night's repose;
And reported this to the chief of his rear,
Still to the enemy hovering near.

XXXVIII.

He as day began to fail,
Learned he might gain the army's trail
By a rude, obscure, but nearer road.
Where a patriot farmer's plenteous board
Would supply his soldiers the meal they lost
That morn, when their path Cornwallis crossed.
Then throwing his horse still nearer the foe,
He bade his infantry onward go,
And food for all in haste prepare;
For soon could the horses gallop there.

XXXIX.

Leaving a few for watch and ward
To wait upon the Earl's vanguard,
At proper time with will right good
Darted the horsemen through the wood,
And joyous reached the generous store
For men and steed at the farmer's door.
The honest man's benignant face,
The blooming daughters' ministering grace,
His sons' and servants' nimble pace,
And over all the matron's sway,
A snatch of sunshine on that day
Of cloud and toil and slaughter threw,
Which only soldiers' eyes can view.
The gay young officers their aid,
Would press upon each merry maid,
And seldom mid their service spare
To touch a hand or lock of hair,
And as their conscious glances meet
Breathe some wild vow in whisper sweet.

XL.

But that was all the feast they knew—
For, hark! they hear the signals true—
O'Hara presses fast—
And is as nigh to the bridge hard by
O'er which the sole road past,
As they themselves.—“To horse! to horse!
Support the sentries, cavalry!
And bend with utmost speed your course
To gain the bridge, my infantry!

Methinks from what they learned this morn.
They will not press too rashly on."

XLI.

And it was true. The lesson taught
That morning, now advantage brought
To the brave teachers. For at fault
About the hostile numbers, halt

The light troops of O'Hara's van—
And this gives time to gain the bridge,
And from destruction's threat'ning edge
Save every horse and man.

For so obscure the path they took
They dreamed not peril there to brook,
And the brief sweets of social bliss
Made them unwontedly remiss ;
But the eager Earl by tory guiles
Had learned 'twould save him several miles,
And braved a road to reach his foe,
Where Greene nor Williams dared to go.

XLII.

Too fast he pressed for Lee's bold corps
To raze the bridge they hurried o'er,
And the vale which now they traverse yields
A fair expanse of open fields.
Some were, beneath the winter rain,
Emerald with harvest's hardy grain.
In meadow some, of tint less green,
Where nibbled sheep and cattle lean,
In others, naked showed the land
Where shattered rows of cornstalks stand ;

And hungry swine upon their hunt
Of almost naught, complaining grunt.

XLIII.

But from the summit of the ridge,
Which formed that valley's broom-straw edge,
As on its open brow they go,
'Twas beautiful to see below
Cornwallis's bannered host.

Along its brave, triumphant line
O'Hara, Tarlton, Leslie shine,
And Webster of the breast divine;

But shone their chief the most.
For not in noble rank and name
Than merit and in well-earned fame
Was the great Earl's the highest claim.
The Legion sees the glory-blaze
With eyes that kindle as they gaze,
And still so near to O'Hara goes
A stranger had not deemed them foes,
Unless their demeanor at times be viewed
At a wild defile or torrent rude.

XLIV.

And now the darkness gathers fast,
O will they not repose at last ?
No ! vainly spreads the sacred shade,
The life-lamp to replenish made ;
The Dan is near, and not a corps
Of Greene's must reach the sheltering shore.
So dreamed the Earl, and in despite
Of cold and dark and starless night,

Made soldiers trudge and horses tramp
To break the slumbers of his camp.

XLV.

And what are those fires that blaze before
The very eyes of the brave Light corps,
In the form of a large encampment seen?
"It must, it must, be the camp of Greene!
O some one haste and bid them fly,
While for their safety we shall die.
Aye, let us on Cornwallis wheel
And make his staggering army feel
What blows can desperate valor deal!
Was not this lesson taught the free,
Ages ago at Thermopylæ?"
These fire-words breathed from rank to rank,
Soon Williams's ear delighted drank,
And Eager Howard's breast did burn
His bayonets on the foe to turn,
And from its scabbard leaped the sword
Of Washington to bathe in blood,
And Lee's high bosom throbbed to claim
A death-bed of immortal fame.
And when they learned 'twas yesternight
The troops of Greene those fires did light,
Much grieved they seemed awhile, to be
Robbed of such deed of chivalry.
But soon with joy their bosoms glow
Their charge in safety yet to know;
And when at length the impatient Earl
Gave for a time his flags to furl,

They sink into delicious sleep
While faithful guards their vigils keep.

XLVI.

But brief as sweet was that repose—
To-morrow Earl Cornwallis knows
That Greene must reach the Dan,
And scarce the midnight watch is set
Ere gun and gun of the vidette
Announce O'Hara's van.

Gaily the light troops take their way,
For this they deem the crowning day
Of their brave toil, their gallant care—
To-night they'll breathe Virginian air,
And on that proud and patriot shore
In peace and plenty sleep once more,
Their noble service nobly done,
Their contest for an army won.

XLVII.

As hotly as Cornwallis pressed,
He gave one hour for food and rest—
That hour too did Williams take
For men and steeds their meal to make
And scarce again they took the road
Before their joyous bosoms glowed
To learn that Greene and all his train
Were safe on the Virginian plain.

And then a great example shined
Of how the body's swayed by mind,
For instantly with buoyant limb
Seemed almost in the air to swim

The renovated infantry;
But still upon the Legion's rear
The brave O'Hara following near
Rivaled their hot celerity.

XLVIII.

Williams approaching, now the Dan
Left to control O'Hara's van,
That gallant Legion Partisan,
And hastening to the river shore
Was at the sun-set wafted o'er.

The Legion infantry next hied
Rapidly to the river side,
And soon were ferried o'er the tide,
While their comrade horse of sabres spread
A dazzling veil round the column's head
Which still O'Hara urged to pour
Upon them at the river shore.

XLIX.

And now appear the rising stars,
And from his front the brave hussars
Darted away. The waters splash
As in them the stripped chargers dash;
While to the boats the riders leap,
And in compacted squadrons keep
The swimming horses. Floating wide
Their long manes rippled with the tide,
And terror in their eyes appears,
And quiver the responsive ears,

Till safely from their path of foam
Up the Virginian bank they roam,
And wait until their riders come.

L.

Last o'er the stream, the guardian group
Of all, were Lee with Armstrong's troop,
And Quartermaster Carrington,
Safe to the shore of shelter borne.
And chiefly by the latter's aid
This passage of the Dan was made;
'Twas by his diligence and care
That boats, collected every where
Along the stream, were brought in store
Enough to waft the army o'er,
And now upon the saving banks
That army welcomed him with thanks.

LI.

Swift to the river O'Hara pressed,
But all was silence, all was rest;
Its bosom just freed of bold Hussars,
To foam though lashed as their horses splashed,
Now placidly mirrors the placid stars.
These from their everlasting eyes
Smile on the shifting scene;
And the unconscious river lies
A peace-maker between
The warring hosts, which sink to rest,
Each knowing it had done its best,
And calmly sleep on either plain
As if they ne'er should toil again.

THE MAID OF THE DOE.

CANTO SIXTH.



THE MAID OF THE DOE.

CANTO SIXTH.

THE CONFLAGRATION.

I.

Not this the moon, that steals from morn
Up the star-flowered lea,
As o'er the prairie a silver fawn
Before a bright Pawnee,
As Phœbus glorious with his bow,
And tinctured like the day-spring's glow—
Not this the moon, whose rounded splendor drew
Homage from all the twinkling train,
And the soft glory of her mantle threw
Upon her mountain reign,
When last the soon-to-sever pair
Of lovers saw her shining there.

II.

O precious page of memory's book,
Where whisper sweet and sweeter look,

Soft, transient things of breath and ray,
 Live freshly till our dying day !
 How oft amid his battle broils,
 How oft amid his marching toils,
 Did Laurens still a moment earn
 To that delicious page to turn !
 " Where on the mountain loves to go
 Now the lone maiden of the doe ?
 Turns to this plain her anxious eye
 From where her watch-tower scales the sky ?
 Sweet being, but to earth half-given !
 In naught but half-way down from heaven !
 O hasten she now on her homeward path
 To the flowers I warmed from her own hearth ?
 Is still her slumbering beauty hid
 Beneath the panther coverlid ?
 And when its fur receives her knee
 Is one pure prayer still breathed for me ?"

III.

While such soft thoughts his toils beguiled
 The hostile fire had swept the wild.

The very moon whose round of rays
 Last held them in united gaze,
 Lit the sweet maid with waning beam
 By mountain precipice and stream,

The night she fled and to rescue led,
 Her father from his foe,
 The loyal band he kept at hand
 Upon the creek below.

IV.

For Ruthlyn heard the mountaineers
Had sent a band of volunteers
From wild New River's hills, to press
In haste to Greene through the wilderness,
And tell him that the mountains' sons.

Kents, Prestons, and Floyds,
Peytons, Lewises, Cloyds,
And many other gallant ones,
Would to his aid with rapid pace
Soon come by the old Buffalo trace,
And to urge a prayer that to meet them there
His orders he would send
By those volunteers of the mountaineers,
Whither their course to bend.

V.

These mountain sons were of those wild ones
The savage borders breed,
Who often the chase on the Indian race
From bear and buffalo speed.
And like their quarry they pursue
Their way on foot, as tireless too.
Sparkled their eyes at the tale of the prize
Upon the mountain crest;
For Ruthlyn told of treasures of gold
Hid there in a human nest,
And the beauty of the sweetest bird
That ever mountain echo heard.

VI.

That waning moon, to see it rise,
And greet it with the sacrifice,
Whose incense is devoted sighs,

The maiden left her bed;
 For on the fair and fading page
 Which love hath conned from age to age,
 Despite the counsels of the sage,
 Of love she nightly read.

She deemed that Laurens's eye of blue
 Was fixed upon the love-leaf too,
 With gaze as fond and faith as true,

When her soft musing's flow
 Was broken by the startled bound,
 The sudden pause and wild look round,
 And the spread nostril's fear-breathed sound
 Of her alarmed doe.

Dares hungry wolf to prowl so nigh,
 Or panther with his greenish eye?

Screened by the cabin, she glided round
 To where its shadow darkened the ground,
 And wrapt in the panther's tawny hide
 She may observe nor be descried.
 Distinctly soon wild forms she sees
 Stealing along behind the trees;
 And from the conduct they pursued
 Knew they could not be there for good.

“Father, awake!” she softly cried
 Through the window at the cabin's side,
 “A fearful foe is lurking nigh—
 I to the camp below will fly,
 And quickly will your faithful band
 Deliver you from hostile hand.”

VII.

No more she said, but keeping the screen
 Of cabins herself and the prowlers between,

Down the steep mountain side she goes
With footstep rivaling her doe's.
Faster she flies as through the dark
Now breaks the watch-dog's furious bark,
And as an answering rifle rings
Fear and affection lend her wings.
'Tis scarcely credible how soon
Glittered beneath the waning moon,
The sword or bayoneted gun
Of those who to the rescue run,
Led by the maiden as they go,
And she out-speeded by her doe.

VIII.

Meanwhile, could scarcely from his door
Her startled father look, before
The fierce marauders reached it too,
And threats denounced of all they'd do
Unless he gave to them his gold,
And child to their conductor bold.

IX.

"Aye, sir!" said Ruthlyn, stepping forth,
"You know how long hath sacred troth
To me been plighted by the maid,
And how thou hast for gold betrayed
My love, your country, and her cause;
But justice hath eternal laws,
And by her endless reign prevails
To balance all things in her scales.
Your fate now trembles on their beam,
And this her sentence thou must deem:

This hour give Flora to my sighs,
And thy ill-gotten gold a prize
To these brave patriots, and free
The rising sun your steps shall see.
Consent at once; for waste of breath
Were other words, and instant death.
Thou know'st I brook not whining strife—
See for thy bosom bared the knife!"

X.

He turned, and saw in the icy beam
Of the moon the cold steel icier gleam
In savage hands reared o'er his head,
And his wife's aspect glazed with dread
At the fell sight; yet calm in thought,
His mind a glimpse of safety caught
From Flora's flight; and in delay
Alone he knew that safety lay,
And therefore anger, scorn and pride
Sternly repressing, thus replied.

XI.

" Why should it more your honor shock
To force my will than force my lock?
Since you have me, what here is mine
By the same potency is thine.
The treasure which the royal cause
To my control or keeping draws,
By war's stern rights, which serve the strong,
Would to my conquerors belong.
But that did with my baggage go
This evening to the creek below—

It being my purpose to have gone
From this bleak dwelling with the morn.
Some little money in my purse
Is here, yours by the rights of force,
And similar rights will rise elsewhere
When similar force you carry there.
As to my daughter, on her voice,
Sole let it rest to make her choice.
If now she will her hand bestow
As you desire, why be it so.
If she will not, the patriot cause,
Which equal rights by equal laws
Boasts to establish and maintain,
Will never brook for transient gain,
To have the innocent and young
To the base ends of violence wrung—
Nor these the men, of souls so brave,
To treat a lady like a slave."

XII.

Some of the borderers, though rude,
Had in their bosoms much of good.
These touched by Hamilton, proclaimed
His propositions fairly framed,
And swore that they were much more ready
To serve than to offend a lady.
From this to wrangling they proceed,
When after some time 'twas agreed
To search the house while the mother went
To bring the daughter to consent
At once to give away her hand,
And go at morn with the patriot band.

XIII.

Though empty rooms confirmed the tale
 Of Hamilton, they did not fail
 To search the cabin o'er and o'er,
 Above the joice, beneath the floor,
 All save the little close-barred room,
 Where they the trembling maid presume,
 Of strife, of even love afraid,
 Upon her mother's bosom laid,
 Startled to leave that hallowed nest,
 Yet panting for her lover's breast—
 So much had Ruthlyn's specious arts
 With falsehood prepossessed their hearts.

“Come, my young bird!” exclaimed a voice
 At length, “’tis time you made your choice—
 Give us a peep at your dainty charms,
 And bless your lover’s longing arms.
 What! not a word? Pshaw! open the door,
 We have not time to joke much more!”
 The anxious mother begged delay,
 And a little while their hands they stay;
 But anger from impatience grew,
 And soon they rend the door in two,
 And Ruthlyn started to find alone
 The parent bird, the young one flown.

XIV.

Then all to rage and riot grew
 To miss the gold and maiden too,
 And, then, to deem that daring guile
 Had robbed them of the double spoil,

Inflamed them to the height. "Come on!"
Cried of the gang the fiercest one;
"This grey deceiver straight shall guide
To where his gold and daughter hide.
As to the force their valley holds,
'Tis easy, locked in slumber's folds,
To kill the vermin in their holes,
And rid the region of the pest
Which shames it in that tory nest.
And this one, they have hung so high,
Let it in smoke and ashes fly
Still nearer to the invaded sky!
The cub her dam will follow, when
The fire has seized upon their den,
And the blaze will scare that painted flesh
He longs to taste, to Ruthlyn's mesh."

XV.

He said, and the fiercest the torch applied
To the cabin, and all down the mountain hied,
Their captive forced on and Ruthlyn their guide,
And the mother followed, though apart,
As prompted by her tender heart.
"Ah! hah!" cried Ruthlyn, "I see her doe!
Flora is not far off I know—
See yonder through the moon-streaked shade,
How lightly flies the sylvan maid!"
He said, and to o'ertake her flew,
And the fiercest borderers follow too,
But ran not far before
The soldiers that lay by her pathway
A murderous volley pour,

And fiercely forth with bayonets bound
 And pin the crippled to the ground.
 The rest fly off with panting breath,
 And darkness shelters them from death.

XVI.

O joyous was the meeting then
 Of child and parent, chief and men ;
 "But come, my friends, we must hurry on,
 And leave the mountain with the dawn ;
 The rebels soon may haste in wrath
 To intercept us on our path ;
 Besides 'tis time for bosoms true
 On our dear Haw to rendezvous.
 These here whom death's dark shade o'erspreads,
 Must lie where treason made their beds."

XVII.

Thus spoke their leader, and the word
 His followers obedient heard ;
 But paused, and marvelled much to view
 Ruthlyn among the slaughtered crew,
 And wondered more what evil power
 Betrayed him to the fatal hour.
 Much musing on the strange event
 In awe and silence on they went,
 While the left cabins flaming high,
 Threw a fierce glare on earth and sky,
 And stained with red and sparkling blaze
 The silver tissue of moon-rays.

XVIII.

Mourned the soft virgin to behold
 In winding sheet of fire rolled

The cot to tender memories so dear!
Of't bared to winter sleet and breeze,
The torn bird nests on naked trees
Had caught her eye and filled it with a tear,
And now her own wild mountain nest,
Which deeper, holier joys had blest,
And love with all its care had dressed—
How its consuming blaze her sight did sear!
She hurried away from the scene of woe,
But oft exclaiming "O where's my doe?"
"Would we could find her!" the father said—
"But spreading soon from the mountain's head,
The fire will sweep the wild—
And though she loose her gentle doe,
For what she saved will bear, I know,
A grateful heart my child.
Stern is the fate that drives us on,
And see yon star portends the dawn."

XIX.

While these pursued their anxious way
Fell Ruthlyn on the mountain lay—
No wound had stopped the vital breath,
But maimed, he counterfeited death.
Now raising from the chilling ground
His head, he cautious looked around,
But nothing saw in the lurid glare,
Of those he allured by promise fair,
Save such as were around him strown.
He listens even for a groan
To give him hope that some one nigh
Might but in feigned extinction lie.

But no! not even that dismal sign
Of comfort, guilty one, was thine!

Next in a whispered voice of dread
He called; but silence held the dead.
Then loud and louder still he spoke;
But naught save mocking echo woke.
“O! O!” at length with frantic tone
He howled, “and am I left alone
With shattered limbs and wasted blood
To perish in this savage wood?”

Then from the earth he strove to rise,
But was held down by agonies.
Next he essayed to drag his length
Along the ground, but had not strength.
Then with that horror-looking eye,
Which sees the death it cannot fly
In all its terrors glaring nigh,
He viewed the world he lived to mar,
And met reproof in every star,
That with its eye serene, sublime,
Looked from eternity on time.

“Alas!” he cried, “that we, whose day
Is but the twinkle of a ray,
Should let is briefest passion-flame
Betray us to eternal shame,
And, what is worse, if any faith
Of man be true, to endless wrath!

“But weighed on the great mercy-beam,
O am I guilty as I seem?
Pure was the fire that warmed my soul
Until it burned beyond control.

Spurned where I loved, to madness stung,
By jealousy's wild tortures wrung,
Still my design was to have won
'To bliss through me my worshipped one.

"And when upon this horrid night
I sought the mountain's cottaged height,
I deemed it sure her father's gold,
Which I'd repay a hundred fold,
Would send away my wild allies
And leave me with my darling prize;
And the first shock of wrong soon past,
Peace would abound and rapture last.
But gold and daughter both away,
To passion and surprise a prey,
Swept by a tide I could not stay
To desperate crime my steps were bent,
Scarce conscious of the course they went.

"I'm not the first thus down to drop!
Who after the first step can stop?
That little step which seems so small—
Aye, thence proceeds the endless fall!
That is the sea-puss* by the verge
Of the depths of crime, to feed their surge.
The outward eddy of the whirled
Down gulph which ends in sin's dread world!
For that leaves our good Angel's side,
And welcomes Evil for its guide.
She hastening from the light that shines
From virtue on her dim confines,

* So is the under-current called, so often fatal to bathers in the breakers, along the sea-shore.

In some delusive shape of bliss
Allures to her abhorred abyss.

“ But who my palliative shall know?
Ye winds, O tell it as ye blow!
Ye stars, so read from age to age,
Blaze it on your unfading page!
And moon, when wolves have ceased to prey,
And my bones whiten in your ray,
Let from thy gentle brow be beamed,
‘ He was not guilty as he seemed ! ’
Vain! vain! my memory in the land
Will wear the traitor’s double brand,
And in the realm to which I haste
How shall I look, with whom be faced?
Caught in the manor,* as they say,
And swift to judgment borne away !

“ Man, man! what is it makes thee dare
To mar thy maker’s work so fair,
To bring on law and order blight,
And think that thou can’t set it right?
O ’twas my fatal error! I
Thought good for bad might pardon buy,
But caught amid my crimes, I die
With treasons, rapine, falsehood foul !

“ Wolves, ye may well in chorus howl
To such night-told confessions! Hear!
Methinks their clangors gather near—
What balls are those in lurid glare
Approaching with their awful stare?
And I see long teeth gleaming white
In the fell blaze that scares the night;

* A law term, which signifies being taken in the act of guilt.

They've scented blood, with hunger gaunt
They come—Fierce fiends, avaunt! avaunt!
O Thou upon the mercy throne,
Let these my agonies atone."

Perished his prayer in the death-groan;
And left was now the lifeless clay
To beast and bird and flame a prey.

XX.

For as enlarged the fire became
The mountain reared a crest of flame,
And stalked before the morning's beam
The conflagration's lurid gleam.
The ravens, startled from their sleep,
On their black wings in circles sweep,
And scenting soon the awful feast
Swelled with their croak the howl of beast.

But when before the kindling day,
The moon began to pale her ray,
And stars to vanish one by one
Behind the glory of the sun,
Before his step the winds respire,
Then swept the wild a flood of fire,
And made the dead a funeral pyre,
Scorching the fell wolf from his prey,
And driving the dark bird away.

The golden eagles high in air,
Quickly reflect the lurid glare,
And to the earth-born clang and gleam,
Defiance, as they circle, scream.
But as the rising sun illumines
The kindred glory of their plumes,

Fuller to feel the nobler fire,
 High their gyrations go and higher,
 Tracing in air the circling spire,
 That fancy shapes as never ending,
 On which ascending and descending,
 The heavenly influences beam*
 Like angels in the patriarch's dream.

XXI.

Should fancy whence those eagles fly
 Throw round her comprehensive eye,
 'Twould view below a mountain waste
 With silver streams minutely laced,
 Where nature in her artist freaks
 Strewed darksome dells by sunny peaks,
 Made barren vales, and richly spread
 The meadow on the mountain's head.
 A speck the mighty hills among,
 'Twould see a party toil along
 Of men and women, of the train
 Some mounted, whose pack-horses strain
 Beneath their burdens. Bayonets gleam
 Among them; and their faces beam
 With joy, the mighty plain to view
 Below them stretching wide and blue,

* _____ “the spirit's ladder
 That from this gross and visible world of dust
 Even to the starry world, with thousand rounds
 Builds itself up; on which the unseen powers
 Move up and down in heavenly ministries.”

Coleridge's Wallenstein of Schiller.

As from the meadows they began
To approach the pinnacles of Dan.

And o'er that plain it might behold
The flight of Greene and Morgan rolled,
Destined by that same stream to rest,
Here springing from the mountain's breast;
And yonder armies and this train
Strive the same neighborhood to gain,
And 'twixt their reaching, those the Dan,
And this the Haw, was short the span.

'Twas sweet to the mountain refugees
To view their old domestic trees,
And sweeter to see the mighty Earl
Their enemies from their country hurl,
And the royal banner in triumph fly
Alone beneath their natal sky.

XXII.

And bustled Hamilton about
With Pyle and others to bring out,
Respondent to Cornwallis's call,
The young and brave in arms, and all
Who loved the king and kept his laws,
To show themselves and aid his cause;
And oft the mountain refugee
His kinsman Hamilton would see,
A gallant loyalist now bent
To fill his waning regiment.
And much they labored in accord,
And counselled with their general Lord,
Who to their views assistance lent,
And Tarlton up Haw river sent,

The loyalists to strengthen there
And drive the patriots to despair.

XXIII.

One night this dashing cavalier,
Who loved war, women, and good cheer,
At Hamilton's found lady-charms
A sweet exchange for men-at-arms,
And Flora with her radiant eyes
Awaked his graceful gallantries.
Gaily he talked of battle scenes,
With rapture spoke of beauty's queens,
And hinted Carolina's plain
Had furnished one o'er all to reign.
The lovely object of his praise,
Heard it with such a listless gaze,
That he felt piqued to make her show
Her beauty in emotion's glow.

XXIV.

“I fear,” he said, “the country here
Seems flat to my fair mountaineer,
Or that her wishes linger yet
Too fondly with some mountain pet.
I cannot hope her doe to meet,
But if their steeds be not too fleet
I'll catch a stripling of Lee's corps
To wait upon her steps once more,
Or dark-eyed minstrel boy to sing
Of beast arrested in his spring.”

XXV.

The nymph's confusion and surprise
Were pictured in her cheek and eyes,
And Tarlton, to allay again
Feelings which seemed to give her pain,
Resumed: "You see how rumors fly!
And those the lightest, fastest hie,
And never yet our army missed
One of a lovely loyalist."

XXVI.

"Then tender them our thanks, I pray,"
Said Flora, striving to be gay,
"And tell them when their fancies weave
Around the frightened lives we live
Tales of romance, we fondly deem
Our being, like the soft moon-beam
On some wild torrent quivering,
Is dearer for its shivering.
And tell them too, that from Virginia,
We hope each Quixote's fair Dulcinea
Will from her valorous knight receive
Tidings, to bid her gentler grieve,
Weekly, at least, by captive borne,
Until her faithful knight return.
But chiefly you to ear and sight
So modelled from La Mancha's knight;
Why should you thus your eyes expand?
You means not thou—you understand—
I merely meant you brave to pray,
That should the enemy come this way,

You will remain to be our guard,
Not save yourselves by riding hard!"

XXVII.

Tarlon replied: "Sweet, mischievous one,
That sparkle in your eye of fun
Richly repays me for the jeer;
But dread (nor hope?) a foeman here—
Not e'en the Legion Partisan
Will ever dare to cross the Dan.
Should they, I'll bring them captives all,
And your own eyes shall choose your thrall."

XXVIII.

"Thank you!" replied the lady bright;
Lest you retract your promise light
I had better haste to say good-night!"

XXIX.

"O deem not so! With every look
'Tis deeper graved in memory's book,
Among the vows that love acquaints
The heart to offer to its saints."

XXX.

"'Tis fair you should revenge bestow so,
By treating me as Del Toboso,
For hinting in a way polite,
I hope, at famed La Mancha's knight;
Then, since we are even, let your plain
Provincial say good-night again!"

XXXI.

While speaking, in apparent glee,
She bowed with graceful courtesy,
Then turning, shed on her retreat
A train of twinkles from her feet.

“What! gone?” he cried; and as from sight
She disappeared, he heard good-night
Repeated in that gentle tone
The angel ones can breathe alone;
And thus to soothe through eye and ear,
She left him sounds and visions dear.

So when away the blue-bird flies
On azure wings to azure skies,
In heavenly voice and hue it shows
Signs of the realm to which it goes.
Thus this dear angel of the world,
As to her couch her wings she furled
Left on the intercurrent air
Sweet tokens of the heaven there;
And the bold champion of the Earl
Of nothing dreamed but the bright girl

THE MAID OF THE DOE.

CANTO SEVENTH.

THE MAID OF THE DOE.

CANTO SEVENTH.

THE RETURN.

I.

Yet on Virginia's generous soil
The patriot army rests from toil,
And plenty blessed their bivouacs
In hospitable Halifax ;
Sweet realm of fair and fertile charms,
Hugged in the Roanoke's bright arms,*
While to her bosom her's prefer
To hold her little Banister.

By her brave sons as brothers pressed
With all that kindness adds to rest,
They happy talked of dangers gone,
And happier of the hopes that dawn.

II.

Apart the chosen corps of Lee
Held their own camp of jollity,

* The Dan and Staunton Rivers.

Where surgeon Skinner shone, the soul
 Of mirth around their flowing bowl.
 His Falstaff form and tastes and fun
 Procured his soubriquet, Sir John,
 From every boon companion.
 And from his wit and mirth apart,
 There was a kindness in his heart
 Which made him of their bivouac
 In more than one sense the "sweet Jack."

Though in the duel with his sword
 Or pistol ready, he abhorred
 The shock of armies and the roar
 Of battle; and he said, to cure
 And not to kill a surgeon ought;
 And 'twas presumption if he fought—
 An arrogant aping of a trade
 For soldiers not for leeches made;
 An arrogance which all should hate,
 And he would never imitate.

A privileged one, he had his joke
 With all, to all familiar spoke,
 Ready, from his commandant down,
 With all for all things but a frown.

Though woman deeply he adored,
 His reign was at the festive board,
 And, with his martial mates around,
 The camp's rude goblet now he crowned.*

* See Colonel Lee's sketch of Skinner, Mem: 2d edition, page 260. And thinking the reader might be amused with a letter of his I found among General Lee's papers, I have inserted it in Note F.

“ My lads,” he said, “ this full release
From toil and strife, this glimpse of peace,
These generous friends, this sheltering Dan,
The plenteous board and flowing can,
To crown them only want the fair.
O would they deign our feasts to share.
My vote would make this spot our care,
And let the poor pine-barren elves
Of regions near protect themselves.
Famine might guard them, I opine,
From foes that ever cared to dine.”

IV.

“ Indeed, Sir John, our fears were great
During the movements made of late,
That your chief title to renown
Would have been lost, or much gone down;
For many argue that your claim
To Falstaff’s humor, as his name,
Unlike your model of knighthood, gains
More from your corpulence than brains.
Yet that had made more debonnair
Your form for frolics with the fair.”

V.

“ And, pray, who tickled your leanness’s ear
With tales of bags of bones being dear
To ladies’ fancies? Don’t they run
With horror from a skeleton,
And tempt with this and feed with that
Whate’er they pet, to keep it fat?

I've often in my fancy's regions
 Compared the tribe of men and pigeons.
 There are the common sort, like you,
 Bred only or to roast or stew.
 There are the fan-tails, which puff out
 Their breasts, and sit or strut about
 With their spread plumes, the pets and blisses
 Of little bread-and-butter misses;
 Just as the fops among you boys
 May be some very green-ones' toys.

“ Next comes the tumbler, which compares
 Well with ambition's vaulting heirs;
 For these as senseless soar in flight,
 And fall as headlong from their height;
 But then the bird, when tumbled down
 Saves oftener than the man his crown;
 And let one wild emprise miscarry,
 This fowl will paint our light-horse Harry,
 Though now by fortune's favor blest
 The eagle's feather decks his crest.”

VI.

“ Of light-horse Harry thus? But soon
 Will he to Prince Hal change his tune.
 With every nice addition strung
 That flattery loves to teach the tongue.”

VII.

“ Nonsense! You know his age yet leans
 Farther from thirty than his teens,
 That in his fame I joy in truth,
 And would aright direct his youth.

“ But you fly off as wild as widgeons,
And spoil my catalogue of pigeons;
I'll punish you with the privation
Of e'en my choicest illustration.”

VIII.

“ Sir John, to pardon pray incline,
Not more for our sakes than thine!
Think how each ear to hear it yearns,
And how your tongue to tell it burns!
And though unmoved you see us wrung,
At least take pity on your tongue!
For should it blister, we opine
You'd scarce enjoy this generous wine.”

IX.

“ Well said, my lads! so pass it on;
I ne'er was a hard-hearted one.
So touching these same pigeons, stouter,
Nobler than all, last comes the pouter!
Their pet of pets, the ladies dwell
With rapture on his portly swell;
His form, which, bursting, seems with sighs,
Their fancy fills as well as eyes,
And these in love-dews softly floating
Show how their tender hearts are doating!”

X.

“ Bravo! Ha! ha! would not his sighs
Make us believe he'd felt such eyes?”

“ Aye, that I have, when I was stouter,
And better emblemed by the pouter.

And could we here awhile remain
 Might hope to meet such gaze again.
 But there's Prince Hal, and ah! his gaze
 Some tiresome enterprise betrays;
 Yet save us, O ye powers divine,
 From all the barren realms of pine!"

XI.

"Good news, Sir John! The battle's dust
 Shall soon rub off the encampment's rust.
 So now dispel your cares in glee, for
Cras ingens iterabimus aequor;
 Which means, my famous tun of man,
 To-morrow we must cross the Dan."

XII.

"Recross the Dan! My own Prince Hal,
 O rather say we never shall!
 Shield from the foe this river zone,
 And drive him back to starve alone;
 Leave famine, guardian of the pines,
 To thin my Lord's beef-loving lines,
 While Ceres, our ally, and Bacchus,
 Shall aid us here when they attack us."

XIII.

"O mighty champion in the wars
 Of those divinities, had Mars
 Like them inspired thee, how sure
 To conquest would'st thou lead the corps.
 But, plump one, for thy comfort hear
 We shall avoid those barrens drear,

And have subjected to our law
The pretty valleys of the Haw,
If you will but the natives fright
Enough to gain a conqueror's right;
For now they scarce are neutral ground,
So much the tories there abound.
But, gentlemen, a parting draught—
Sir John, to what shall it be quaffed?"

XIV.

"Pass me the bottle, while I think
Of something sage for you to drink—
Have you all filled? Well, I propose:
The wisdom which avoids one's foes,
Fidelity to generous friends,
And wit to take the good God sends."

XV.

"Therefore, Sir John, avoid the mesh
Of every sinful lust of flesh;
Hold to your lancet still, and bleed
Your friend, while you to fullness feed,
And take, at least, quotidian twice
A scripture recipe 'gainst vice."

XVI.

"Sir John, we join in your libation,
But with the Colonel's illustration,
And add, to do it more genteelly,
May those your skill may stick bleed freely!"

XVII.

“ Ditto to that!—and towards your leech,
 I trust you’ll practice as you preach;
 I’ll to my credit set a scorce
 For bringing wit into the corps.
 Prince Hal, these fellows have begun,
 You see, to aspire to a pun.”

XVIII.

“ Charge them, Sir John, for every one—
 But gentlemen, good-night! The dawn
 Must see us o’er the river borne:
 Brave Pickens’s martial salamanders,
 And Oldham’s veteran Marylanders.
 The gallant expedition join,
 Rival your fame and swell your line.
 In naught of preparation fail,
 Not e’en a shoe must want a nail;
 Bring all we have of strength and speed
 To serve us at the approaching need;
 For though a maxim of our globe is
 That men propose and God disposes,
 His dispositions love to bless
 Skill, zeal, and valor with success.
 And let the cold and careless lie
 Beneath misfortune’s frowning sky.

“ Then, Armstrong, see the sorrel troop,
 Like meteors dazzle as they swoop;
 Take care, O’Neale, each bright blood bay
 Shines like a courser of the day.

And, Eggleston, thy steeds of night
Must from their darkness sparkle light.

“ Laurens, you will your wish obtain,
Carlos will be with us again
In place of the poor bugler slain.
Although my friend whose life he saved
To loose the merry urchin grieved,
He yielded to my stronger right
And will despatch him here to-night.
Again with morning’s earliest glow,
Your troop will hear his bugle blow.”

XIX.

And true, at dawn the warrior train
Was marshalled by his leading strain,
And soon in boats o’er the river floats
And traverses its southern plain.
Evening their covert encampment saw
Near the road from Hillsborough to Haw,
While parties of cavalry, on the scout,
In either direction spread about.
Nor day had dawned ere one returned,
And told that Tarlton bound
Beyond the Haw to give the law
To loyalists around,
Had marched with cannon and infantry,
Besides his famous cavalry;
For general there was the loyal stir,
And to aid it he came from Hillsborough.

XX.

And now the patriot cohort knows
Before its steps a quarry goes,

That were a noble prize;
 And guides aright to lead the hunt,
 And sharp videttes it throws in front,

Its feelers and its eyes.

Just so the panther wins his way
 Unseen to spring upon his prey;
 And like this terror of the night
 It keeps the paths removed from sight,
 And hopes its prey shall feel its force
 While pausing at the water course.

But reaching the great road they saw
 That Tarlton's troops had passed the Haw,
 And now their way of ravage wended,
 'Mongst those who freedom's cause defended.

XXI.

With devastation hand in hand
 They swept this little patriot land,
 And plunder stalked from door to door,
 Nor spared the dwellings of the poor;
 Those primitive spots, where man appears
 Companion half to all he rears.
 The dog his master's meal partakes,
 In the child's cup the kitten slakes
 Its hunger; for her share of crumbs,
 The hen with all her chickens comes,
 And pigs excluded snuff the meal,
 And for their own in chorus squeal,
 Which to supply and stop their groan,
 The kindly house-wife hastes her own.

And ever round the open door
 The cattle, horse, and woolly store,

And at the cabin's sunny end,
Where fruit trees o'er the low roof bend,
The garden, mother and daughters tend ;
And grain and meadow within view,
Where sire and sons their toil pursue,
Present a picture of the age,
Sung in the poet's pastoral page.

XXII.

But, ah ! its peace was fled from here !
The fathers gone, the mothers' care
Hovered around the children dear,
And each with tender ardor pressed
To smooth the ravage done her nest.

Devoted ones, still ply your toil,
'Twill soothe the tears you shed the while,
And helps each precious drop that starts
To ease the burden from your hearts.
Tears were not made to fall in vain !
Comfort grows in the gentle rain !
And every pearly drop now poured
Doth serve to whet a patriot sword.

Toil on ! Indeed 'twas not worth while
For men to blight your balmy smile,
But every champion yonder seeks
Again to light it on your cheeks.

'Twas those enraged by civil broil,
Who brought you to your tears and toil,
Not dreaming that the swords were drawn
To make, alas ! their homes forlorn,
Not by the ravage of their plain,
But sires and sons surprised and slain.

XXIII.

These now with hope and courage high,
Dreamed not a patriot dared be nigh,
And flocked in crowded rank and file
To follow Hamilton and Pyle.
These knowing Tarlton somewhere near,
Sent out to find exactly where;
And glad their emissaries see
So near the gallant corps of Lee.
For easily the mistake arose
Which for their friends mistook their foes,
Since these were tricked in gold and green,
Just like the Rangers of the Queen.
And from the lips of the deceived,
Poured joy to him whom they believed
Tarlton himself, and joyous heard
Returned each gratulating word.

XXIV.

Despite the veil of smiles, within
Deep was that Partisan's chagrin,
To find such quarry in his way,
To balk him of the nobler prey.
But quick his mind a scheme prepared,
By which the natives might be spared;
Yet, if they dared his hand to stay,
By Heaven! they should rue the day.
And o'er their ruin he might go
To grapple with the worthier foe.

XXV.

On this resolved, he with a smile
Sent Tarlton's compliments to Pyle,

And begged he would his band array
Along the margin of the way,
That to their quarters might pass on
His own fatigued battalion.

To Pickens then he tidings sent
Of Pyle, and of his own intent;
Requesting he would keep unseen
His squadron with their twigs of green;
For well the tories knew the sign
Of the militia plumes of pine.

Last, through the Legion were conveyed
The orders instantly obeyed,
Which close the column of horse arrayed;
And at their head with bow and smile
As the feigned Tarlton passed to Pyle
Along his whole well ordered line.
He made them many speeches fine
About their good looks, spirit high.
Their power to pursue or fly
On their swift steeds, and the sure death
Borne on their rifles' fatal breath.

His soldiers, too, with smiling eyes
View the array of new allies,
To whom it much delight affords
To see the bright, presented swords;
And, lo! the chief of either band
Clasps each the other's proffered hand!

XXVI.

But whence that firing in the rear,
That shout of wild surprise and fear?

The tories spy the plumes of pine,
 And read aright the hostile sign,
 And on the instant fire upon
 The rear troop under Eggleston.

XXVII.

Sprung to the charge the steeds of night,
 And swift descend the broad-swords bright,
 As sudden wheeled the glittering bays,
 Shaking as dread a sabre-blaze
 From their high manes, and onward flashed
 The fatal lightning, as dashed
 The sorrels, in their meteor-shine,
 Upon their victims' blasted line.

XXVIII.

A moment since from band to band
 Passed smiles and courtesy;
 Now, bleeding by the other's hand.
 One lies upon its native land,
 Or flees in agony.
 As when a lion turns and rends
 Those who were fondling him as friends,
 The vainly struggling tories die,
 Or horror-stricken, scream and fly.

XXIX.

All passed so sudden it might seem
 The phantasm of a hideous dream,
 But for the evidence around
 Strewed thick upon the bloody ground.
 There Pyle with many wounds seemed slain,
 But was restored to health again;

And Hamilton, though saved from harm
By Laurens's interposing arm,
Stood sorrow-rooted to the field
Where death so many hopes had sealed,
And lowered with indignant eye
That Laurens had not let him die.

But not a prisoner was made,
And not the least pursuit essayed
Of those who from the conflict fled ;
But scorning the unworthy foe
That fortune thrust upon their blow,

The Legion cavalry were sped
On their predestined way,
To see if Tarlton, who was near
Enough the firing to hear,
Was rushing to the fray.

XXX.

But Laurens hastened ere he went,
To that old man with sorrow shent,
Who stood as fixed and lone,
As if, to those in death around,
He were upon their burial ground

A sculptured votive stone.
On the young warrior flashed the time
When on his mountain's brow sublime
The veteran used to stand
Gazing, with all that hope descries
Of triumph painted in his eyes,
Towards his native land.
Now a like sunset gilds his hair ;
But, ah ! the hope—'tis buried there !

And he, the left, the lone, the rent,
Stands but its ruined monument!

XXXI.

Bowed Laurens low as he drew near,
And glistened as he spoke a tear;
"I trust you are not hurt, and trust
None near to you distain the dust,
And most of all, I trust, I pray—"

But here with brow of scorn
The old man turned abrupt away
And motioned him begone!

When swift, without another word,
To join his squadron Laurens spurred,
And in stern silence on the plain
Left the survivor with the slain.

XXXII.

But not his courser left behind
The image of the daughter kind
From that stern sire sprung;
It rose above the column's tramp,
Nor fled till Tarlton's startled camp
Upon their view was flung.

Then, "Why this pause on battle marge?
Why dont the bugle sound the charge?"
Was asked by many a tongue;
And they frowned to see that Pickens and Lee
In consultation so long should be.

XXXIII.

These leaders deem it best 'till morn
The keen sought conflict to postpone,
Completer victory to earn;

Not dreaming that their foe
Would under cover of the night,
That safety seek in stolen flight
He loved to win in open fight

Beneath the day-beam's glow.
Nor had he; but from Hillsborough
Came courier after courier,

Bearing the Earl's behest
For Tarlton's instant retrograde,
Before the Legion's trenchant blade

Should fall upon his crest.
And with a heavy sigh he stole
In darkness from the glory-goal

Fixed in the battle field,
And the first ray of morning saw
His main battalion o'er the Haw,
And thus its safety sealed.

XXXIV.

Such start from darkness' wing they gain,
Their keen pursuers chased in vain,
Though swelling now their gallant train

The mountain warriors ride,
Whose leader, Preston, sent before,
To Greene for orders to his corps,
Those who upon the mountain hoar
In their marauding died,

Or fled away ashamed to tell,
 Or where or how their comrades fell.
 And to have saved this generous band
 From Tarlton's overhanging sword,
 Who left their mountain guarded land
 To shield their country where 'twas gored,
 And to enjoy the gallant aid
 Of arms so strong and hearts so true,
 Atonement to the veterans made
 For the rich prize whose loss they rue.
 Thus soothed, with happier hearts they saw,
 As up its western marge they went,
 In a fair valley of the Haw
 Rise light-horse Harry's graceful tent;
 Sign that awhile their labors close,
 And safety hovers round repose.*

XXXV.

Beneath the airy fabric long
 Had Lee consulting been
 With Preston, when its folds among
 He turned to write unseen,
 As an old man with stately tread
 Entering, to Preston bowed his head;
 His flowing locks were bleached by time,
 And grief had settled in his eye,
 But still he wore his brow sublime,
 And still his head was carried high,
 And anguish, though it sometimes shook
 His voice, could never reach his look.

* See Lee's Memoirs, vol. 2, for a not much more minute account of the operations above described.

XXXVI.

"Time it would seem, sir," he begun,
"Since last we met its work hath done
Of change on one your kindness taught
To deem him graven on your thought.
For by your open door I've seen
 The fountain gushing from its rock,
And on your long-stretched meadow green
The lowing herd and bleating flock,
And what the mountains could afford
Of luxury, on your generous board.
So to my heart your kindness went,
I made a mountain settlement,
Not hence to fly from summer more
Than to be somewhat near your door."

XXXVII.

"O pardon, pardon!" Preston cries,
"That circumstances, change, surprise,
Made me a moment recognise
Your form so dimly, I scarce knew,
My Hamilton, that it was you.
But well I know you now! and dear
It is to meet you even here,
And in this stormy time, which rends
Asunder many bosom friends.
But, save where duty stern controls,
Be there no severance of our souls;
Would you and yours, all safe from harms,
My mountains circled in their arms!"

XXXVIII.

“ But lately, from the turmoil fled,
Deep in those wilds I hid my head,
Yet hunted like a beast, e'en there
They seized me in my covert lair,
And balked of their more precious game,
Enraged, gave my rude den to flame,
When Providence, through my sweet child,
Redeemed us from the bandits wild.
But how these strange events befell
Another time must serve to tell,
Though justice bids me here impart,
It was a traitor barbed this dart—
A leader in my loyal band—
To win by force my daughter's hand.

“ Nor this the extremity of woe,
This war unnatural makes me know,
Where brother brother meets in strife,*
And kin for kindred whet the knife.
But yesterday beneath my care
Were ranged my friends and followers dear.
On me reposing they revealed
The loyalty they long concealed,
And gathered to the tented field.
I saw them with confiding eyes
Gaze on their foes in friendship's guise,
And marked the look of horror come,
While wonder held us still and dumb

* Two brothers shot each other dead during the battle of King's Mountain.

To see the steed-and-sabre-shine
Burst sudden into crushing line,
As the doomed victims see the flashes
Of lightning blazing as it crashes.
I saw them in their dying sighs
Turn on my face reproachful eyes,
In which were writ in letters clear,
'You brought us to the shambles here,'
And while the rest are slain or fled,
You stand and nothing harms your head.

"They did not know the magic charm
Which interposed a saving arm
Between my bosom and the steel,
Which all the rest were doomed to feel:
For even those who 'scaped with life
Went bleeding from the fatal strife;
And cherish in their breasts, I find,
Suspicions of that cruel kind,
Which plainly rested on my head
From those then numbered with the dead.

"I know the laws of war allow
Mankind the truth to disavow,
I know that in its dreadful game,
They falsehood may for truth proclaim,
And by such practice cunning sows
Dissension often 'mong its foes.

"But by our ancient amity,
Our rites of hospitality,
By all that man from man may claim
In friendship's, nay, in mercy's name,
Spare what the pure most precious think
When standing on their being's brink;

Let an unsullied character
 Gild my poor, gloomy sepulcre !
 Make not my name with treachery soiled,
 Descend upon my only child !

“ My struggles with this world are done ;
 My race of toil, ambition, run.
 He whom his own have ceased to trust,
 His strength is shivered into dust !
 What can I but perchance bestow
 Sometimes a drop of balm on woe,
 And with these silver locks afford
 Perhaps some shelter from the sword,
 For those to whom my broken wing
 Is yet the only covering ? ”

XXXIX.

Not the good man to whom he spoke
 The tale could hear, the sight could brook,
 Of age in anguish and despair,
 Nor yield his tribute of a tear.
 All that the kindest bosoms have
 Of balm, to soothe his grief he gave.
 “ And here is one whose easier task
 ’Twill be to accomplish what you ask,”
 He added, as the approaching one
 Offered his hand to Hamilton.

XL.

“ No ! sir,” exclaimed indignantly
 The latter, as he frowned on Lee,
 I saw your hand, in friendly grasp,
 That of my mangled comrade clasp ;

While by your Legion's cruel blade
His followers in the dust were laid,
And he himself beneath their brand
Fell almost while he held your hand.
Though war may justify the guile
That hides a dagger in a smile,
I cannot give my hand to those
Who use such arts against their foes."

XLI.

From 'tother's brow a moment broke
The angry flash; but ere he spoke,
The better feeling held its sway.
"And for what chanced in wild mêlée,
When self-preserving instincts guide
Alone, will sage experience chide?
You saw we stood in peace until
Your followers tried our blood to spill;
You saw then 'twas not my command,
But instinct raised my Legion's brand;
You saw the instant they had quelled
The threatened danger, they withheld
Their blows; and thus your eyes have taught
Yourself, not we your ruin sought;
But all we aimed at on that day
Was to remove you from the way;
We trode to seek a different prey.

"This to effect by prayer, not force,
I risked the safety of my horse;
And had commenced entreating Pyle
By all the ties of common soil,

By present safety to his band,
To aid no more with armed hand
The invaders of his native land,
When your own conduct forced my corps
To do what patriots must deplore—
Distain their swords with native gore.
And trust me, none who yielded life
In that deplored, unlooked for strife,
More than myself could wish, could pray
That all had been at home that day.

“ Had that been granted to my prayer.
As sure as you are standing there
The ruin of that ruthless horde
Of Tarlton’s had adorned my sword;
And that destroyed e’en now had been
Cornwallis full in flight from Greene.

“ Then think not those you mourn thus slain,
Poured out their loyal blood in vain;
The sources of that sanguine spring
Have saved an army to your king;
And if your ardor filled their ranks
Well have you earned that monarch’s thanks,
And well deserve his people’s praise
To crown the sunset of your days;
And what truth may do I will aid
To have that debt of justice paid.”

XLII.

Glowed Hamilton’s pale brow the while
With almost a triumphant smile
To hear a foeman’s lips impart
Truths so delightful to his heart.

Two of the staff of Tarlton's corps,
Made prisoners the day before,
Here joined their conference, which turned
Upon the mutual rage that burned
So fiercely, through the civil broil,
Upon the Carolinian soil;
And all agreed, the purest fame
Would throw its halo round his name
Who should extinguish the fell flame;
And counsels joined in amity
To bring once more humanity,
Even in war to fix her reign
Upon that desolated plain;
And for that task benign of theirs
Were happier at their evening prayers.

THE MAID OF THE DOE.

CANTO EIGHTH.

THE MAID OF THE DOE.

CANTO EIGHTH.

THE RESULT.

I.

Perchance when she, for man's supreme
Enchantment made in Eden's bower,
By the Hand dripping yet with beam
And hues just wrought in star and flower,

Was, amid the delicious sweets
Of her new life, new earth, new sky,
Ejected from the blissful seats
Of Paradise, and doomed to die—

Ah ! then, perchance, when her sad eyes
Watched that moon waste away from sight,
Whose growth they witnessed in the skies,
She deemed it ever lost from night,
And thought that with her rose of Eden
Had fled the lily-queen of heaven.

II.

If so, how sweet it was again
 To see her peep on evening's reign,
 And as her beauty waxed more bright,
 Her longer lingering on the night,
 Until to her full glory grown
 She won from darkness' reign her own!

III.

Just so when these sweet ones, in whom
 The charms of the first mother bloom,
 Droop their bright heads in the first shower
 Of tears—that erring mother's dower—
 They deem the drops must ever pour,
 And bliss show her sweet face no more.

IV.

But on the sorrow-limits soon
 Hope's crescent beams like the young moon,
 And growing as the gloom she wades,
 Drips a soft lustre on its shades,
 Till in the sun of joy she fades,
 As night's spent regent hastes to lay
 Her head upon the breast of day.

V.

But now not where for hope to go
 Knew the lost maid of the lost doe—
 In anguish and distraction lost!
 For rumors wild her path had crossed
 Of fell encounter 'twixt the bands
 Where sire and lover drew their brands;

And many a bleeding one went by,
But yet no father met her eye;
O did he with the wounded bleed,
Or with the dead? and whose the deed?

VI.

As these dread apprehensions passed,
Bowed her young head to sorrow's blast.
Her calmer mother sitting near
Could not restrain the welling tear,
Though often from her soul would gleam
A light upon the gentle stream,
That tinged it with a rainbow glow,
In which was shadowed, "For I know
That my Redeemer liveth."* Man,
And canst thou ask, to life's brief span,
Why evil by the all-good is sent,
And infinite love lets hearts be rent?
Wilt learn not from the Eternal's words,
And all the examples time affords,
He blights the ties to earth that cling,
To let us to His bosom spring,

Job, 19: 25. This most comfortable of all truths, wrought into the sublimest poetry, was first impressed upon my attention by finding it engraved upon a large crystal, shown me by a daughter of that Col. Preston mentioned in these pages. If they ever meet her eye, I trust she will be pleased with this memento, of the instruction, as well as pleasure I derived from her society. The crystal was found on her husband's estate, and cut and engraved at her instance.

And startles us with wild alarms
 To make us feel his clasping arms,
 And from the touch, enjoy on earth,
 A glow of the immortal birth,
 While the ennobling griefs prepare
 The heart for its enjoyments here?

VII.

For let thy thought through nature range,
 And study the vast volume. Change
 Seems the great nurse of life and joy;
 Death itself comes not to destroy.
 So much as to create, or give
 Room for created things to live;
 And life must still renew its breath
 In sleep, the counterfeit of death.

So change the seasons, days and hours;
 And mind must have its sun and showers,
 Its night, its tempests, e'en as they
 That feed its tenement of clay,
 Else, not more than the physical world,
 Its wonders can it have unfurled.

VIII.

Wouldst thou have life without a woe?—
 Whence could misfortune's grandeurs flow?—
 Whence fortitude, and pity's tear,
 To bring mankind to angels near?
 Wouldst have no wants?—Where then the smile
 Of plenty crowning honest toil?
 No danger with its startling frown?—
 Where then could courage win his crown?

No death?—How in this kneeded clod
Couldst ever hope to look on God?

O finite, as thou art, ne'er dare
To wish things other than they are!
What thou call'st evil, understood
Aright, is but the nurse of good—
The storm, which rouses as it jars;
The night, that brings the wondrous stars.

Without the smile that beams from tears,
Without the hope that springs from fears,
The cares, ennobling vital breath,
And e'en the majesties of death,
Man's life would little have beyond
A water-lily's in its pond.

Rightly to use and rightly prize
The inevitable, stamps the wise;
And still to hope and bravely bear,
Shows the true faith in heavenly care.

IX.

As of the hours, the most forlorn
And dark is that before the dawn,
And just before the new buds spring
The forest is nakedest shivering,
And earth most desolate is seen
While zephyrs are bringing her mantle green—
So human hearts are often drearest
When all they pant for hovers nearest.

X.

A voice, a step, aroused the glance
Of Flora from her sorrow-trance;

Surely the voice—the step she knew—
 It enters—“ Carlos, is it you?
 O you can tell us all? Those eyes,
 They look not as if fraught with sighs!”

“ No, I was hastened here to tell
 Your father is at hand and well;
 Just now, by Laurens hither sent,
 I left him in my Colonel’s tent.”
 “ A prisoner?” “ No!” “ How came he there?”
 “ Led by his will on some high care.”
 “ How ‘scaped he when so many poured
 Their blood?” “ By Laurens’s sheltering sword.”
 “ O, didst thou see this or surmise?”
 “ I saw it with these very eyes.”
 “ Mother, dost hear? Herald of bliss!
 Thanks, thanks! and here’s my hand to kiss.”

He touched, and with a knee depressed,
 Kissed it, and thus the fair addressed:
 “ Lieutenant Laurens at the gate
 Begs on the ladies he may wait.”

Suffused her cheek the modest glow,
 And even tinged her neck of snow,
 While to her mother glanced her eye
 In which was read—seek there reply.

Evinced the matron calmer joy,
 But sent to welcome him the boy,
 When Flora to her chamber fled.
 Was it to hide her blushes red?
 Was it to soothe to gentler rest,
 The dulcet flutterings of her breast,
 Or veil from e’en a mother’s eyes
 Her overflowing ecstasies?

Or was it to see if a trace appears
Around her lids of distaining tears,
And with their lustre to repair
The disarray of her curling hair ?

XI.

Whate'er the cause, she fled away,
And seemed to Laurens long to stay.
His greetings with the mother past,
Often towards the door he cast
An anxious glance. She comes at last !
And with her rosy radiant bloom
Brought a new morning in the room.

Their hands are clasped ; but ecstasy
Blows girdled in timidity,
E'en as the loveliest rose-bud's gloss,
Glows through a bursting veil of moss,
And from the eye the rapture-flash
Comes softened by the drooping lash ;
Thus they, O no ! not half expressed
The tremulous joy of either breast,
But every moment either's eye
Told more and more of ecstasy,
And every moment flowed their words
More like the love-notes of the birds,
Till, left alone, her hand caressed
A moment, by his lips was pressed,
Which, rapture-guided, dared to seek
Their kisses next upon her cheek,
When, tranced in bliss, his clasping arms
An instant held her trembling charms.

XII.

Another voice—another tread—
A father's arms are round them spread—
A father's blessings on their head!
A mother helped to join their hands,
And one was near to bless the bands;
And never marriage vow was spoke
From hearts that sweeter felt its yoke.

“Be happy now, my children dear,
To-morrow you shall fully hear
How this, which seems so sudden done,
Flows from deep consultation
With friends, and foes, to mercy friends,
United to promote its ends.

“The current of events of late,
Hath flowed as from the hand of fate;
I stemmed it till 'twould almost seem
Impious to struggle with the stream.
What some think casualties are given,
The pious deem, as signs from heaven;
And wisdom in events hears still
The voice of her true oracle.
In a dark traitor, bandit horde,
In conflagration and the sword,
Signs have I read that might appal,
As did the writing on the wall.
From all hath this grey head been saved
By two whose hearts together cleaved.
Could I do less than join their hands,
And pray for blessing on the bans
Now, when I find that duty too
Bids me the deed benignant do,

Fitly to crown a purpose fair
To check the horrors of this war?—

But now enough! dear ones, dismiss
All care and yield your hearts to bliss.”

XIII.

’Tis sweet to see that what is best
Is most extensively possessed.
What are the luxuries wealth can spread
Upon its costly board, to bread?
What all the cordials art can wring
From luscious fruit, to the clear spring?
What all the grandeurs gold can buy,
To those of ocean, earth and sky?
Dearest of every flower that blows
And commonest is the red rose;
Type of the feeling which imparts
The sweetest joys to human hearts;
And this, creation’s dearest dower,
Is universal as the flower.

XIV.

And know ye naught can long endure,
No matter what, unless ’tis pure?
Corruption, be it in what it may,
Is but a name for swift decay.

XV.

Then, ye who through perpetual strife
Seek what ye deem the end of life—
Enjoyment, happiness, content—
Take care you have your footsteps bent

To the true fountains, and be sure
 You carry soul and senses pure.
 For the great sources of delight,
 What are they if the sense be blight,
 Made for their sweet perception, more
 Than light to blindness, or the store
 Of music in the song-bird's throat
 To those who never heard a note?

XVI.

Two vast departments nature makes,
 One that bestows, and one that takes ;
 Compounded each and shaped to be
 In everlasting harmony.
 The first, by the eternal Will,
 Flows on unchanged, unchangeable,
 The last, the more to exalt his soul,
 Was left to man's supreme control.

Thence, in his choice it lies to bring
 His vessel to the eternal spring,
 Clean or unclean ; but that defiled,
 The draught from the sweet fount is spoiled ;
 But pure, through the full soul expand
 The flavors caught from God's own hand.

XVII.

And never purer pair than this
 Came to the sweetest fount of bliss.
 Life's gentle tasks and generous cares
 Had occupied their growing years ;
 And grief, misfortune, solitude,
 Had taught them lessons great and good.

Instead of flattery's baleful arts
And coquetry to waste their hearts,
And petty emulation's toil,
And crowds that harden, blunt and soil,
They drew from nature's fostering breast
The love that blesses while 'tis blest,
And learned no wiser, better sense
Than teaches true benevolence.

XVIII.

Thus formed, and in such school as this,
They knew what man can know of bliss.
The very tears she lately shed
Were fountains whence her joys were fed,
So tenderly with rapture-sighs
He kissed their traces from her eyes;
So earnestly he prayed their stain
Might never touch the lids again.

XIX.

“ But love, you know we soon must part;
Must then no sorrow touch my heart?
Must I not feel some natural fears?
Must I not shed some natural tears?”

XX.

“ Yes, dearest, as the damask rose
Weeps for the day-beam when it goes
Drops, which but more her beauty adorn,
And gild the gladness of the morn.

“ But, loveliest, let us not employ
These precious moments save in joy,

And when they vanish, let them fling
 Their sweetness back from memory's wing;
 For nothing argues of divine
 Less in the bosom than to pine.
 'Tis of the earth that earthward tends,
 The heavenly heavenward ascends.
 Let the mole-eyed in darkness mope;
 Those beauteous orbs were made for hope;
 And be its radiance ever given
 To the sweet miniatures of heaven!"
 Thus joy and wisdom mingled beams
 Till rapture took the shape of dreams.

XXI.

And from their union not accrued
 Their blisses only, but the good
 Of all the region round—'twas oil
 Poured on the waves of civil broil.
 Of either side the leading ones
 Met frequently at Hamilton's,
 Whose social board its influence brought
 To aid the lessons wisdom taught.

And after Guilford's day of fame,
 Which quickly from this period came,
 And the great armies went away
 To distant fields to bear the fray,
 No more the baleful sword of war
 Blazed in the valleys of the Haw;
 And from that scourge the sweet release
 Prepared all hearts to welcome peace;
 That peace which freedom's flag unfurled
 In triumph to the gladdened world,

O'er its new half, where man might see
The miracles of liberty.

XXII.

O be they here forever wrought,
And more and more with blessing fraught,
Until their hopes, whose mighty toil
From thraldom freed the generous soil,
May to perfection grow complete,
And make their land the happy seat
Where all shall have an equal share
In laying burdens all must bear ;
Where every one his own shall use,
And none his neighbor's shall abuse ;
Where 'twill at length be taught on earth
To value things by their true worth,
And he the noblest be confessed
Whose conduct proves him to be best ;
Where gifts, great in themselves, when turned
From their right purpose, shall be spurned,
And of desert the touchstone true
Be, not what people *have*, but *do* ;
Where genius, learning, pleasure, pelf,
That centres in one's little self,
Shall as the miser's gold be prized,
Which buys his right to be despised ;
Where men, not hollow shows and forms
Shall seek, but that which fills and warms ;
Where power shall be understood
As but the means of doing good ;
And who abuse the sacred trust
Be reckoned viler than the dust ;

Where, far from gaining reverence, pride
Shall be what men will most deride,
And arrogance and all her brood
As noxious reptiles be eschewed;
Where the great fountain of the sense
Men prize, shall be benevolence,
And high and holy wisdom come
To make indeed a Christendom!

XXIII.

Such hope in patriot bosoms burned
When to its sheath the sword returned;
Lit by such vision to his home
Did the war-broken veteran roam.
This mighty good would pay his toil,
Would vindicate the civil broil,
Sanction the independence won,
And crown the fame of Washington.
His veterans, save their glory-scars,
Gained but such hopes by all their wars;
And the great champions asked no more,
But sought their hearths content and poor,
And happy saw their store increase
By the delightful works of peace.

XXIV.

But homeward none their footsteps bent
More joyfully than Laurens went;
And in that time of outstretched arms
To welcome heroes home,
In triumph come from battle-harms,
With laurels fresh in bloom,

None did a deeper rapture know
Than the blest lady of the doe,
Whose arm sustained, to crown their joy,
A beauteous, curly-headed boy,
With lily throat and rosy cheek
And bright blue eyes that well could speak,
Before, to welcome him from war,
The cherub lips had learned papa.

XXV.

From summer heats to be removed,
To view the scenes where first they loved,
More perfectly to be at rest,
And in each other wholly blest,
They sought again their mountain wood
In all the sweets of solitude.

The service boughs, the first to fling
Out their white banners to the spring,
Had lost their blossoms, and had blown
The sweet crab-apple flowers and gone;
Nor with the dogwood's bloom of light
The sunny ridges now were bright;
But by the streams the grape's perfume
Fell o'er the azalia's golden bloom.
These with each shade of yellow tinge
The mountain vales profusely fringe;
And in such ample globes they glow,
And into bowers so lofty grow,
The stranger almost deems he roves
A wilderness of orange groves.

XXVI.

Here amid nature's beauteous work
A cabin on the Laurel Fork,
Named from its fountain the Spring Camp,
Was by its streams and meadows damp,
(For by three creeks and meadow ground
The pretty spot was circled round,)
Saved when the conflagration spread
Erst from the mountain's loftiest head.

So small the cot and rudely dressed
It seemed but as a larger nest,
Or its o'erhanging grove of bloom
Their house, and that their sleeping room,
For while the day its splendor pours
They lived in the sweet out-of-doors;
And waked them every morn to love
Their fellow-lodgers of the grove.

XXVII.

For with the very dawn would stir
The full and feathered orchestre—
The robin red-breasts' warbled frets
Supplied the fluttering clarionets;
The wood-lark's trills or deep or thin,
Were sweet as any violin;
With which the dove's soft cadence suits,
Harmonious as the melting flute's;
While red-birds, with their scarlet crests,
Breathed braver music from their breasts;
The various wrens, but all with life
And spirit stirring, matched the fife;

The many thrushes' tones were mellow
As ever flowed from violincello ;
And blent with these their warbles pour
The beauteous birds of Baltimore.

The passing raven to their tune
Croaked deeper bass than the bassoon ;
While from the golden eagle's throat
Rung out sometimes a bugle note ;
And the merry clinks of the bob-o-links
Chimed in like Turkish bells ;
And the pheasants come, when with their drum
The choir consummate swells ;—
But the baby's prattle the parents prefer
To every feathered chorister.

XXVIII.

And oft their former haunts they sought,
Where love its first sweet lessons taught,
And frequent on their deer-trod way,
By memory-cherished bank and bray,
As with delighted step they go,
The lady called her vanished doe.

At last, responsive to the sound,
They heard, they thought, a sudden bound ;
Then all was still—another call,
And soon they heard a soft foot-fall,
And through the forest stealing near,
And anxious listening saw the deer.

The lady at the vision charmed
Ran to her playmate, but alarmed
She bounded off; and then upsprung,
And in suspense a moment hung,

What seemed a maiden doe;
And, save where on its lily field
Her neck a sanguine flower revealed,
She was as white as snow.
Amid the sombre shades around
The mossy trunks and mossy ground,
The rocks, or lone or piled,
Seemed that bright shape, with dazzling eye,
In attitude away to fly,
A spirit of the wild,
And soon they lost the vision fair,
As it had vanished into air.
But when recovered from surprise,
Fully again did recognise
The mother deer the mother dame,
And gentle as of yore became;
And happy in the forest go
Once more the lady and the doe.

MUSE of the wild, thus to prolong
I never dreamed this mountain song;
But who such themes, such scenes can sing,
Nor dally with the echoing string?
Who where his country's heroes trode
Can tread nor linger on the road?
Who through a realm, in fancy stray,
Beloved and lone and far away,
Which present, fed his bright day-dreams,
Which absent, with their memory teems,

And to its charms his tribute pay,
Nor pause in foolish, fond delay ?
E'en yet I scarce can have it done,
Nor thank my neighbors, one by one,
(And I must name Buck Dickerson,)
For all the kindness they bestowed
When mine was there a stranger's road.
Then at their side I chased the deer,
Was welcomed to their mountain cheer,
And listened by the wizard hour
To tales of spells and words of power,
And heard about the milk-white doe
With which this lay began its flow.

Let it with her be sped !
And would like her, as vision bright,
It could in beauty gleam to sight,
And vanish graceful as her tread !

F I N I S .

A P P E N D I X

TO

THE MAID OF THE DOE.

APPENDIX.

NOTE A.

*Hot from a gun its sulphurous breath
Made him a moment taste of death.—P. 93.*

While the text is in press, I have discovered the following account of the event alluded to, in a communication of the Rev. Wm. Hill, to General Lee, through Major J. Stephenson. Mr. Hill is distinguished for his learning and talents, and for an eloquent sermon he preached at General Morgan's funeral. There can be no doubt of the correctness of the following narrative, as Major Stephenson states Mr. Hill received it from General Morgan himself. I regret I had not met with it in time to have made the text conform to it. But the deviation is immaterial as far as Morgan's merit is concerned.

“When ready to scale the walls, Morgan ordered one of his men first to mount the ladder, but seeing him hesitate, he took the ladder himself, and as soon as he raised his head over the wall a musket was fired in his face; the ball missed him, but he was badly burned by the powder, some grains of which he carried in his face to his grave—and by the shock was thrown back at the foot of the ladder. He arose, and took the ladder a second time, and as soon as he was high enough he sprung over the wall, but alighting upon a cannon, he was thrown upon his back under its muzzle, which no doubt saved his life; for there were several bayonets thrust at him at the moment, which struck the cannon, but missed him, in con-

sequence of his being thrown upon the ground. But by the time he arose, his men came pouring in after him, and so diverted the attention of those around him, that he escaped, and presently took all that part of the town prisoners."

Here then is an additional instance of gallantry displayed by Morgan on that occasion, of which the histories I have read are silent. From G. W. P. Custis, Esq., of Arlington, I have derived what is said in the text of Morgan's habits as a hunter. His words are: "After the conclusion of the war of '56, called the French war, Morgan for a time led a hunter's life. His hunting grounds embraced the region now called the North Mountain, and the glens and valleys leading to the Potomac. He has remained in the wilderness four months without entering a human habitation, subsisting chiefly upon the game with which the forests abounded. In bad weather he resorted for shelter to a cave formed by overhanging rocks. Once when employed in cooking some venison at a fire made at the entrance of his cave, the hunter discovered particles of earth and stone dropping from the rock above, and looking up, saw the visage of some animal retiring from the summit of the cavern. Morgan's ready rifle was in a moment in his hand, and levelled toward the spot from which the animal's head had just been withdrawn. Presently appeared the points of two ears, and then the glistening eyes and broad forehead of an enormous panther, who, allured by the savory fumes of the broiling venison, was, no doubt, desirous of sharing the hunter's repast. Morgan touched his trigger, and in an instant the tawny savage came tumbling into the fire, scattering the brands far and wide in the death-struggle, which was soon terminated, the ball having entered the creature's brain. Morgan preserved the skin as a trophy, and wore it as a pouch in his memorable march to Quebec in 1775.

"General Morgan's estimate of the best quality of a soldier was somewhat unique. He said, that in regard to fighting, the men of all nations were pretty much alike; they fight as much as is necessary, and no more. But for the great *desideratum* in a soldier, give him a Dutchman; for *he starves well*. One of the finest eulogiums upon the life and character of the *pater patriæ* was pronounced by General Morgan in 1797. Speaking of the *necessity*

of the beloved chief to the happy consummation of the war of Independence, Morgan said: 'We had officers of undoubted military talents, as Greene and others. We had officers of the most undaunted courage, as Wayne and others. One great master spirit was yet wanting, to guide, direct, and animate the whole, and Almighty God sent that one in the person of George Washington.'"

NOTE B.

*The wild-skin cap and wild-bird plume
Shading their brows with savage gloom.—P. 95.*

The description of Morgan's company, given in the text, is happily confirmed and illustrated by the following reminiscences from Mr. Custis: "Morgan's first and famous corps of riflemen, with which he marched to the camp at Cambridge in 1775, was composed of hardy yeomen who dwelt about the Blue Ridge, and the then frontier settlements of that mountain region. They were in comfortable circumstances, and the sergeant's bounty would not have tempted a single individual among them to enlist. But Morgan was their chief. They had drank with him, fought with him, and kicked up a dust for miles around under his banner. So, when Morgan said, 'Come boys, who'll follow me to the camp at Cambridge?' it was the appeal of a Highland chieftain to his clan. The stalwart mountaineer rushed to the call. They gathered around their intrepid leader. Short was their preparation for war. The costume of the woodsmen—the hunting-shirt, leggins, and moccasins—was their uniform; the rifle, tomahawk, and knife, were their arms; and their baggage, the blanket buckled to their backs. Thus equipped, they strode away to the North, a band of young giants, for the combats of Liberty.

"The deadly effects of the American riflemen were soon felt in their enemy's armies, and with a view to counteract them, bands of Yagers (hunters) were embodied in the German principalities, and shipped to the hostile plains of America. In open ground these troops might be effective, but to fight the American woodsmen in

their native forests, the Yagers were found to be wholly useless. The German troops upon beholding the Hunting-shirts—each man to his tree—would run for shelter to their camps, shouting in all the English they knew—‘Rebel in de bush!—Rebel in de bush!’,

NOTE C.

For though I know misfortune's blow, &c.—P. 101.

Since preparing canto third for the press, I have obtained from among General Lee's papers, one endorsed “Major Lee's order of attack on Paulus Hook.” The directions contained in it are followed with these remarks:

“Major Lee is so assured of the gallantry of the officers and men under his command, that he feels exhortation useless. He therefore only requires the most profound silence and secrecy. He pronounces death as the immediate fate of any soldier who may violate, in the least degree, the silence he has ordered to be observed. He recommends to his officers, to add to the vigor of their attacks the advantage of surprise; therefore to continue occult till the moment of action.

“Success is not at the will of mortals—all they can do is to deserve it.

“Be this our determination and this our conduct, and we shall have cause to triumph even in adversity.

“Watch word—‘Be firm.’

HENRY LEE, JR.”

The address in the text was extended for the purpose of referring to former achievements of a corps and commander destined to act a prominent part in the sequel, thereby to introduce them favorably to the reader; but I am happy to find its spirit agreeing well with that which actually animated their exertions. The enterprise, as the reader knows, was successful, but perhaps he may not remember how handsomely it was rewarded by Congress. Mr. Sparks in a note (page 376, vol. 6th, of Washington's Correspondence) says: “Congress had passed resolves highly complimentary to Major Lee, thanking him for ‘the remarkable prudence, address,

and bravery displayed by him in the attack on the enemy's fort and works at Paulus Hook.'" Much praise was likewise bestowed on the officers and soldiers of his party. A medal of gold, emblematical of the affair, was ordered to be struck and presented to Major Lee. The brevet rank and pay of a captain were given to Lieutenants McAllister and Randolph respectively; and \$15,000 in money were voted to be distributed among the non-commissioned officers and privates, in such a manner as the Commander-in-chief should direct.

NOTE C.—2.

*But covered most with glory scars
Were Kirkwood and his Delawares.—P. 127.*

I was so fortunate last winter as to be thrown a good deal into the society of Judge Brooke, of the Court of Appeals of Virginia, who is one of the few bright links yet remaining between this and the Revolutionary generation. Our conversation, which I loved to direct to the scenes of his youth, once turned upon the battle of the Cowpens, when he glanced at the unjust silence which had been preserved by history as to the merits of Captain Kirkwood in that action; upon which he briefly touched. I confess, I was so surprised, and so ashamed of my ignorance of them, that I said little; but took the first opportunity of consulting Marshall's Life of Washington and Lee's Memoirs, to see if it were possible that I could have forgotten that they ever mentioned him in their accounts of that brilliant victory. I found that they did not. Yet such was my confidence in Judge Brooke's accuracy, and such my delight to adorn my pages with the name of a man who perished on the thirty-sixth occasion of risking his life for his country, and whom General Lee in the page of his Memoirs above referred to describes as "the brave, the meritorious, the unrewarded Kirkwood," that I inserted in my description of that battle, which was then finished, the mention therein made of him. Meeting afterwards with Mr. Custis, I told him what I had learned from Judge Brooke as to Kirkwood's services at the Cowpens; and he, with his extensive knowledge of

Revolutionary men, was so surprised to hear that Kirkwood was at that battle, that I began to think I might have misunderstood Judge Brooke, and wrote to him to know if I had. From his reply I extract the following passage:

"All I can say is, that I often heard it said in the army, that Captain Kirkwood was in the battle of the Cowpens, and that he first gave the word of command to charge bayonets under the smoke of the first fire given by the Marylanders under Colonel Howard; and that it would be very difficult to convince me that what I heard from so many officers at different times was not true." This was sufficient for me; but for the sake of others, I hunted up and examined Tarlton's Campaigns; but, alas! he too was silent as to Kirkwood's presence in the battle where he was so severely defeated. Under these circumstances, I began to fear that the glorious old soldier's memory would be deprived of its honor from that famous field, when Mr. Custis luckily stumbled on a passage in Major Gorden's Anecdotes of the Revolution, to which he gladly referred me. It is in his account of Michael Docherty, who at page 397 thus speaks: "The bloody battle of Camden, fought on the 16th of August—bad luck to the day—brought me once again into trouble. Our regiment was cut up root and branch, and poor Pilgarlic, my unfortunate self, wounded and made prisoner. My prejudices against a jail I have frankly told, and being pretty confident that I should not a whit better relish a lodging in the inside of a prisonship, I once again suffered myself to be persuaded, and listed in the infantry of Tarlton's Legion. O botheration, what a mistake! I never before kept such bad company; as a man of honor I was out of my *ilement*, and should certainly have given them leg bail, but that I had no time to brood over my misfortunes; for the battle of the Cowpens quickly following, Howard and *Old Kirkwood* gave us the bayonet so handsomely, that we were taken one and all," &c.

This Michael Docherty is recorded by Major Gorden to have been "a distinguished soldier of the Delawares," from whose lips he, the Major, received the above narrative. So that the most incredulous must now believe that Kirkwood was at the battle of the Cowpens—that Howard's sagacity would have placed him in a distinguished

position, which all the world knows his own gallantry must have made the most of.

This recurrence to Judge Brooke reminds me of another anecdote I had of him, which will not be wholly out of place here, as it relates to Morgan, and is graphically characteristic of the old rifleman. The Judge tells me he met Morgan and Burr together in Fredericksburg in the midst of the excitement occasioned by the first publication of Jay's treaty. Of course, every one listened with much eagerness to the opinions of two such distinguished men on such an interesting subject; and Burr was ardent in his denunciations of the treaty. But Morgan replied to him—"Aaron," (for it seems to have been his habit to address his fellow-soldiers quite familiarly,) "Aaron, when I first heard of the treaty, and first read it, I thought of it as you do: but when I heard that the *old Horse* [General Washington] was for it, *I shut my pan.*"

NOTE D.

*Till Howard's self could scarcely save
From his own men this foeman brave.*—P. 134.

"While in this confusion I ordered a charge with the bayonet, which order was obeyed with great alacrity. As the line advanced, I observed their artillery a short distance in front, and called to Captain Ewing, who was near me, to take it. Captain Anderson (now General Anderson, of Montgomery county, Maryland) hearing the order, also pushed for the same object, and both being emulous for the prize, kept pace until near the first piece, when Anderson, by placing the end of his espontoon forward into the ground, made a long leap, which brought him upon the gun, and gave him the honor of the prize. My attention was now drawn to an altercation of some of the men with an artillery-man, who appeared to make it a point of honor not to surrender his match. The men, provoked by his obstinacy, would have bayoneted him on the spot, had I not interfered, and desired them to spare the life of so brave a man. He then surrendered his match."—*Note from Colonel Howard, in Lee's Campaign of '81*, p. 97.

NOTE E.

*From thy south shore, great stream of swans,
Came the great Lees and Washingtons.—P. 153.*

The following genealogy of the Lees of Virginia was written by William Lee, who was afterwards our Minister at the Hague. Though a genealogical sketch, it is not without historical value, and may therefore be interesting to others than the members and connections of the family it more immediately concerns:—

“Richard Lee, of a good family in Shropshire, and whose picture, I am told, is now at Cotton, near Bridgenorth, the seat of Lancelot Lee, Esq., some time in the reign of Charles the First went over to the Colony of Virginia, as Secretary, and one of the King’s Privy Council, which last post will, for shortness, hereafter be called, of the Council. He was a man of good stature, comely visage, an enterprising genius, a sound head, vigorous spirit, and generous nature. When he got to Virginia, which was at that time not much cultivated, he was so pleased with the country that he made large settlements there, with the servants he carried over. After some years he returned to England, and gave away all the lands he had taken up and settled, at his own expense, to these servants he had fixed on them; some of whose descendants are now possessed of very considerable estates in that Colony; after staying some time in England, he returned again to Virginia with a fresh band of adventurers, all of whom he settled there. During the civil war here, Sir William Berkeley was Governor of Virginia. He and Lee being both loyalists, kept the Colony to its allegiance, so that after the death of Charles I., Cromwell was obliged to send some ships of war and soldiers to reduce the Colony, which not being well able to resist, a treaty was made with the Commonwealth of England, wherein Virginia was styled an independent dominion. This treaty was ratified here as made with a foreign power, upon which Sir William Berkeley, who was of the same family with the present Earl of Berkeley, was removed, and another Governor appointed in his room. When Charles II. was at Breda, Richard Lee came over

from Virginia and went there to him, to know if he could undertake to protect the Colony, if they returned to their allegiance to him ; but finding no support could be obtained, he returned to Virginia, and remained quiet, till the death of O. Cromwell, when he, with the assistance of Sir William Berkeley, contrived to get King Charles II. proclaimed there, King of England, Scotland, France, Ireland, and Virginia, two years before he was restored here ; and Sir William Berkeley was reinstated as his Governor ; in which station, he continued, till some time after the Restoration, when he came over here and died presently. It was in consequence of this step, that the motto to the Virginia arms, always, till after the Union, was *en dat Virginia quintam* ; but since the Union, it was changed to *en dat Virginia quartam*, that is, King of Great Britain, France, Ireland, and Virginia.

“Here by the way, I cannot help remarking the extreme ingratitude of this Prince Charles II. Oliver Cromwell, to punish Virginia and some other parts of America, for adhering so firmly to the royal cause, after he had got himself quite fixed in his supreme authority both here and there, contrived the famous Navigation Act, upon a model he borrowed from the Dutch, by which the American Colonies were deprived of many of their ancient and valuable privileges. Upon the Restoration, instead of repealing this act, it was confirmed by the whole legislature here ; and to add to the ingratitude, at two other periods in his reign taxes were imposed upon American commodities, under the pretext of regulations of trade ; from which wicked source have flowed all the bitter waters that are now likely to overwhelm America and this country, and most probably will be in the end the ruin of both. But to return. This Richard Lee had several children. The two eldest, John and Richard, were educated at Oxford ; John took his degree as Doctor of Physic, and returning to Virginia, died before his father ; Richard was so clever and learned, that some great men offered to promote him to the highest dignities in the church, if his father would let him stay in England ; but this offer was refused, because the old gentleman was determined to fix all his children in Virginia, and so firm was he in the purpose, that by his will, he ordered an estate he had in England, I think near Stratford, by Bow, in Middlesex, at that

time worth eight or nine hundred pounds per annum, to be sold, and the money to be divided among his children. He died, and was buried in Virginia, leaving a numerous progeny, whose names I have chiefly forgot. His eldest son, then living, was Richard, who spent almost his whole life in study, and usually wrote his notes in Greek, Hebrew, or Latin, many of which are now in Virginia, so that he neither improved or diminished his paternal estate, though at that time he might with ease have acquired what would produce at this day a most princely revenue. He was of the Council in Virginia, and also other offices of honor and profit, though they yielded little to him. He married a Corbin, into which family his predecessors in England had before married, but the name was then spelt Corbyn, or Corbyne, I think of Staffordshire; from this marriage he had, and left behind him when he died, in Virginia, which was some time after the Revolution, five sons, Richard, Philip, Francis, Thomas, Henry, and one daughter. Richard settled in London as a Virginia merchant, in partnership with one Thomas Corbin, a brother of his mother's; he married an heiress in England by the name of Silk, and by her left one son, George, and two daughters, Lettice and Martha; all these three children went to Virginia, and settled; George married a Wormley there, who died, leaving one daughter; then, he married a Fairfax, nearly related to Lord Fairfax of Yorkshire, and died, leaving by his last marriage three sons that are now minors and are at school in England, under care of Mr. James Russell. Lettice married a Corbin, and her sister married a Tuberville. Their eldest children intermarried, from which union George Lee Tuberville, now at school at Winton College, is the oldest issue. Philip, the second son, went to Maryland, where he married and settled. He was one of the Proprietors' Council, and died, leaving a very numerous family, that are now branched out largely over the whole Province, and are in plentiful circumstances—the eldest son, Richard, being now a member of the Proprietors' Council.

“Francis, the third son, died a bachelor. Thomas, the fourth son, though with none but a common Virginia education, yet having strong natural parts, long after he was a man he learned the languages without any assistance but his own genius, and became a

tolerable adept in Greek and Latin. He married a Ludwell, of whose genealogy I must give a short account, being materially interested therein.

"The Ludwells, though the name is now extinct, are an old and honorable family of Somersetshire in England; the original of them, many ages since, coming from Germany. Philip Ludwell and John Ludwell, being brothers, and sons of a Miss Cottington, who was heiress of James Cottington, the next brother and heir of the famous Lord Francis Cottington, of whom a pretty full account may be seen in Lord Clarendon's history of the Rebellion, were in Court favor after the restoration of Charles II. John was appointed Secretary, and one of the Council in Virginia, where I believe he died without issue. Philip, the eldest brother, went to America as Governor of Carolina; from whence he went to Virginia, and married the widow of Sir William Berkeley, by whom he had a daughter, that married a Colonel Park, who was afterwards Governor of the Leeward Islands, in the West Indies, and died in Antigua, the seat of his government; and one son named Philip. After some time old Philip Ludwell returned to England, and dying here, was buried in Bow Church, near Stratford. His son Philip remained in Virginia, where his father had acquired a very capital estate, and married a Harrison, by whom he had two daughters: Lucy the eldest, who married a Colonel Grymes, who was of the Council in Virginia; and Hannah, who married the beforementioned Thomas Lee; and one son, Philip. This Philip was, as his father had been, of the Council in Virginia. He married a Grymes, by whom he had several children, most of whom died in their infancy; and in the year 1753 his wife died. In 1760 he came over to England for his health, and in 1767 he died here, when the male line of Ludwell became extinct. He left heiresses, three daughters, Hannah Philippa, Frances, and Lucy. The second daughter is since dead, unmarried.

"This Thomas Lee, by his industry and parts, acquired a considerable fortune; for, being a younger brother with many children, his paternal estate was very small. He was also appointed of the Council, and though he had very few acquaintances in England, he was so well known by reputation, that upon his receiving a loss by

fire, the late Queen Carolina sent him over a bountiful present out of her own privy purse.

“Upon the late Sir William Gooch’s being recalled, who had been some time Governor of Virginia, he became President and Commander-in-chief over the Colony, in which station he continued for some time, till the King thought proper to appoint him Governor of the Colony, but he died in 1750, before his commission got over to him.

“He left by his marriage with Miss Ludwell, six sons, Philip Ludwell, Thomas Ludwell, Richard Henry, Francis Lightfoot, William, Arthur, and two daughters, all well provided for in point of fortune. Philip Ludwell is now of the Council in Virginia, is married, has two daughters, and lives at Stratford, on Potomac river, Virginia. Thomas Ludwell is married, has several children, and lives at Bellevue, Potomac river, Virginia. Richard Henry is married, and lives at Chantilly, Potomac river, and has several children. Francis Lightfoot, two years ago, married a daughter, and one that will be a co-heiress of John Taylor of Virginia; he has no child, and lives at Manokin, on Rappahannock river, in Virginia. William (the writer of this account) in 1769 married in London, Miss Hannah Philippa Ludwell, eldest daughter and co-heiress of the abovementioned Philip Ludwell, has no children, and is settled as a Virginia merchant, on Tower Hill, London. Arthur studied physic at Edinburgh, where he took his degrees; but disliking the profession, he entered about two years ago a student of law at Lincoln’s Inn, and is now at No. 3, Essex Court, in the Temple, prosecuting his studies. The two daughters, Hannah and Alice, were both well married, and are settled in America.

“Henry, the fifth brother, and next to Thomas, married a Bland, and left John, Richard, Henry, and Lettice. John is dead without issue. Richard is still living, and unmarried, though forty-five years old, which is a great age in Virginia to be single; and his seat is called Lee Hall, on Potomac river, Virginia. Henry is married, and has several children; his seat is called Leesylvania, on Potomac river, Virginia. The only sister of these five brothers married a Fitzhugh, a considerable family in Virginia, and left children. Her descendants are now living.—LONDON, *September, 1771.*”

“Henry Lee, of Leesylvania, married Lucy Grymes, daughter of the Colonel Grymes and Lucy Ludwell mentioned above; and their eldest son was Colonel Lee of the text. He was born at Leesylvania, 29th of January, 1756. His Legion is thus described by Judge Johnson in his *Life of Greene*, a writer who has been deemed not partial to that admirable corps. ‘The legionary corps commanded by Colonel Lee, was perhaps the finest corps that made its appearance on the arena of the Revolutionary war. It was formed expressly for Colonel Lee, under an order of General Washington, whilst the army lay in Jersey. It consisted, at this time, of about three hundred men, in equal proportion of infantry and horse. Both men and officers were picked from the army; the officers with reference only to their talents and qualities for service; and the men by a proportionable selection from the troops of each State, enlisted for three years, or the war.’—*Life of Greene*, vol. 1, p. 354.

NOTE F.

Letter from Surgeon Skinner to Colonel Lee.

“CAMP BEFORE NINETY-SIX, May 29th, 1781.

“DEAR SIR: At length I have joined General Greene with the stores. I am ordered to halt here, and am flattered with the hopes of seeing you and the corps in a few days. Be assured I am anxious to get rid of this charge. The horses I received from McClaud were almost skeletons, and in general, I think very indifferent. I have contrived to get some of them in good order, and most of them rather better than the Rushers.

“Sergeant Kenton has given you the necessary information respecting the quantities of each article. Since he left us I have been obliged to unpack and dry some of the articles which got wet in passing the Enoree. I have used all the expedition and caution in my power. The fatiguing embarrassment of seven hundred miles with wagons—the mortifying circumstances of a six months’ sycophantic slavery in Philadelphia, were matters that I bore with some degree of fortitude, as it was to serve a man and corps that I loved.

Ask yourself, whether I had a right to expect the laconic, severe message I received from you by Mr. Peak, who delivered it to me before a dozen officers.

“ Give my affectionate love to my brother officers, and be assured that I am, with every sentiment that the warmest friendship can inspire,

Yours,

A. SKINNER.”

ERRATA.

Page 98, third line from bottom, for ‘arbor’ read ‘harbor;’ page 104, third line from bottom, for ‘corpse’ read ‘corse;’ page 128, line 15 from top, for ‘Edgar’ read ‘Eager;’ page 136, line 17 from top, for ‘charger’s, read ‘chargers;’ page 145, line 8 from bottom, dele comma after word ‘gleam;’ page 160, line 16 from top, for ‘stain’ read ‘slain.’







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